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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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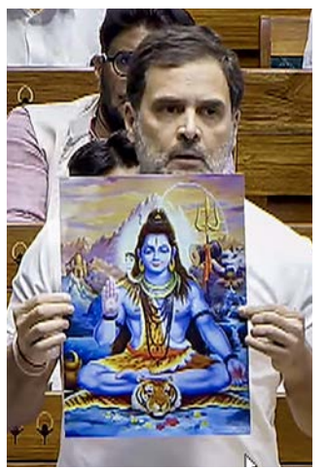
Rahul's fiery Hindu remark singes BJP

RaGa says BJP not Hindus; Modi calls it a violent attack



Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi holds up pictures of Lord Shiva and Guru Nanak in the House during Parliament session, in New Delhi, Monday; Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks in the Lok Sabha *PHOTO: PTI*

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi launched a no-holds-barred attack on BJP in Lok Sabha on Monday, saying the leaders of the ruling party are not Hindus as they engage in "violence and hate".

This drew massive protests from the treasury benches, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi accusing him of calling Hindus violent.

Gandhi, however, hit back at Modi, saying he was speaking about BJP and neither the ruling party nor RSS nor Modi represents the entire Hindu society. Home Minister Amit Shah demanded his apology for painting the Hindu community as violent. Gandhi accused BJP of threatening minorities and spreading hatred and violence against Muslims, Sikhs and Christians.

He said minorities represent India in all spheres and bring pride to the nation.

"They stand like a rock with the country and are patriots, but you (BJP) attack them," he said. Gandhi quoted Prophet Muhammad to highlight that the Quran talks about fearlessness and said when hands are raised in "dua", the "abhay mudra" can also be observed in a way.

Holding up pictures of Lord Shiva, Guru Nanak and Jesus Christ, he referred to Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism and Jainism to underline the importance of fearlessness. He also cited the attributes of Lord Shiva and teachings of Guru Nanak, Jesus Christ, Buddha and Mahavir to state that all religions have said "daro mat, darao mat (do not be scared, do not scare others)". Gandhi slammed BJP, saying, "It is clearly written in Hinduism that one should stand with the truth and not back down from the truth or be scared of it," he said. Gandhi further said a Hindu can never indulge in spreading hatred or fear. He alleged that all that BJP does is spread violence and hatred. Gandhi accused BJP of launching "systematic attacks" on the Constitution.

"Modi said (Mahatma) Gandhi was revived by a movie. Can you understand the ignorance?" he said. As Gandhi held up a picture of Lord Shiva, Speaker Om Birla reminded him that rules do not allow displaying placards in the House. Opposition demanded a separate one-day discussion on the NEET leak issue and staged a walkout. — *PTI*

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RAHUL'S BRICKBATS

Hinduism, Islam teach courage, fearlessness

Rahul said that all religions talk about courage, citing Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism to underline importance of fearlessness. He slammed BJP saying that Hinduism is not about hatred. "If you look at Lord Shiva's image you would know that Hindus can never spread hatred but BJP spreads fear, hatred 24X7." he said.

Modi pushed Manipur into civil war

Rahul Gandhi accused BJP government of pushing Manipur into a "civil war" due to its policies and politics. He criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not visiting the state since ethnic violence broke out there. Gandhi alleged that the government is behaving as if nothing has happened in Manipur. "For the prime minister, there is no state of Manipur," he said.

BJP treats Agniveer as labourers

Rahul Gandhi referred to Agnipath scheme as short-term military recruitment and that government regards the Agniveers as "use-and-throw labourers" and does not even give them the status of a "shaheed" . "One jawan is getting a pension, while another is not," he said. Rajnath Singh claimed financial aid of Rs 1 crore is given to the family dead Agniveers.

Thanks to BJP, NEET made for rich students

Rahul Gandhi said students do not believe in the NEET exam because they feel that it is for the rich people and there is no place in it for meritorious students. He dubbed the medical UG entrance exam as a "commercial exam" rather than a "professional one". He accused the Centre of not allowing discussion on NEET as it is not interested in the future of students.

Denied payment, 4 Ballari farmers attempt suicide

BALLARI, 1 JULY

Four farmers attempted suicide after facing prolonged non-payment issues with brokers in Kurugodu, Ballari, on Sunday. The farmers are as Rudresh, Shekarappa, Hanumanta, and Konerappa consumed pesticide. They were rushed to VIMS Hospital and are currently receiving emergency treatment. These farmers sold chilies to traders via brokers and have been waiting for over 18 months without any resolution towards their payments. The prolonged financial strain and exploitation by the brokers drove them to take the extreme step as a form of protest. *—Salar News*

Mob beats Bengal man to death, 4th case in 7 days

KOLKATA, 1 JULY

A man was beaten to death allegedly by a mob in West Bengal's Hooghly district on Monday, making it the fourth such incident in the state in less than a week, police said. While the first such case came to light in Kolkata on 28 June, two more fatal assaults were reported on 29 and 30 June. The victim was identified as Biswajit Manna, a resident of Naita Malpaharpur gram panchayat in Tarakeswar area of Hooghly district, they said. Two people have been detained in connection with the crime, a senior police officer of Hooghly Rural Police said, adding that a suo moto case has been lodged by police. Initial probe revealed that Manna was called by the accused, who were known to the family when he was sleeping at his residence on Sunday night, the police said. *—PTI*

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7 killed in Bihar lightning strike incidents

PATNA, 1 JULY

Seven people have been killed in lightning strikes in six districts of Bihar in the past 24 hours, officials said on Monday. Aurangabad reported two deaths followed by one each in Buxar, Bhojpur, Rohtas, Bhagalpur and Darbhanga, according to a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). Chief Minister Nitish Kumar expressed grief over the deaths and announced an ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased. He also appealed to people to remain alert and follow advisories issued by the Disaster Management Department. *—PTI*

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24-yr-old woman collapses, dies in Aus-Delhi flight

MELBOURNE, 1 JULY

An Indian-origin woman, who was on her way to visit family in India for the first time in four years, died just before the flight was to take off from Melbourne in Australia. Despite feeling unwell, Manpreet Kaur, 24, boarded the Delhi-bound Qantas flight from Tullamarine Airport on 20 June, according to news.com.au, according to her friend. When she was trying to put on her seatbelt, Kaur fell to the floor and "died on the spot", her friend Gurdip Grewal told the Herald Sun.

The flight crew and emergency services attempted to provide medical assistance, a Qantas spokesman said, but she reportedly died of tuberculosis. *—Agencies*

Hassan cop stabs wife to death outside SP's office

HASSAN, 1 JULY

A 48-year-old police constable allegedly stabbed his wife to death outside the office of Superintendent of Police in Hassan, on Monday. Mamata, a resident of Channapatna on the outskirts of Hassan, was married to Lokanath 17 years ago.

Mamata had come to the SP office to file a complaint against her husband due to ongoing family disputes. Loknath attacked her, stabbed her in the chest when he saw his wife reaching the police station against him. She was rushed to a nearby hospital where she succumbed to injuries. Lokanath, who is posted at a city police station and Mamatha used to have frequent fights in recent days over dowry issues. Despite receiving half kg of gold and

Lokanath

Rs 50 lakh as dowry, Mamata's parents alleged that Loknath's demands persisted and he ultimately killed her over dowry. According to the police, Lokanath allegedly stabbed his wife twice on a pavement outside the SP's office. Following the attack, Loknath fled the scene but was eventually arrested. "The constable has been taken into custody and further investigation is underway," the officer said. *—Salar News/PTI*

Hassan police file first case under new penal code

Police on Monday registered the first case in the state under the new penal code, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The case pertains to 'rash and negligent driving', which caused 'death by negligence'. The new code came into force on Monday replacing the colonial Indian Penal Code. FIR under section 173 of BNSS on a complaint by Ravi HS.

—PTI

K'taka releases draft bill for gig workers

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

Karnataka Government has released a draft of the proposed Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2024 aimed to protect their rights in the State with creation of a board, welfare fund and grievance cell among other mechanisms.

According to the State Labour department, the objectives of the proposed bill are 'to protect the rights of platform-based gig workers, to place obligations on aggregators in relation to social security, occupational health and safety, transparency in automated monitoring and decision-making systems and to provide dispute resolution mechanisms,' among others.

The proposed welfare board will comprise government officials, including the Karnataka Labour Minister, two officials from aggregators, two gig workers and a civil society member nominated by the State. *—PTI*

FUTURE AT STAKE

NEET toppers down to 61 from 67 after re-test

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The National Testing Agency(NTA) announced the revised rank list for the medical entrance exam NEET-UG on Monday, officials said.

The revised list was announced after a retest was conducted for candidates who were earlier awarded grace marks to compensate for loss of time as the exam on 5 May started late at six centres.

For the retest conducted at seven centres on 23 June following a Supreme Court order, 48 per cent of the 1,563 candidates did not appear.

NTA officials reported that 813 of the 1,563 candidates appeared for the retest while the others opted for the marks without the grace.

None of the 813 candidates who retook the test on June 23 scored full marks, bringing down the tally of toppers from 67 to 61, officials said

Centre-wise, Chandigarh -- which had just two candidates -- registered zero attendance. The under-scanner Jhajjar centre registered 58 per cent attendance, with 287 of the 494 candidates taking the retest.

राष्ट्रीय परीक्षा एजेंसी
National Testing Agency
Excellence in Assessment

PHOTO: PTI

- NTA officials reported that 813 of the 1,563 candidates appeared for the retest.

Allegations arose that the grace marks inflated scores, leading to six candidates from a single Haryana centre achieving a perfect 720, along with 61 others. Consequently, the top court ordered the cancellation of the grace marks and provided an option for a retest. The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) was held on 5 May across 4,750 centres, with approximately 24 lakh candidates appearing for it. Initially expected on 14 June, the results were announced on 4 June due to early completion of answer sheet evaluations. *—PTI*

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MEDHA PATKAR GETS 5 MONTHS JAIL FOR DEFAMATION

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

A court here on Monday sentenced activist Medha Patkar to five months simple imprisonment in a 23-year-old defamation case lodged against her by Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena when he headed an NGO in Gujarat.

Metropolitan Magistrate Raghav Sharma also imposed a fine of Rs 10 lakh on Patkar.

The court sentenced Patkar after considering the evidence before it and the fact that the case went on for over two decades.

However, the court suspended the sentence for one month to enable Patkar to file an appeal against the order.

Rejecting Patkar's prayer to release her on the condition of probation, the judge said, "Considering the facts...damages, age and ailment (of the accused), I am not inclined to give excessive punishment."

The offence entailed a maximum punishment of simple imprisonment of up to two years or fine or both.

On 24 May, the court had observed that Patkar's statements calling Saxena a "coward" and alleging his involvement in hawala transactions were not only defamatory per se but also crafted to incite negative perceptions about him. *—PTI*

SOME CALL IT MODERNISATION

'New criminal laws draconian, cosmetic'

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The three new criminal laws, which replaced the British-era penal statutes on Monday, have evoked mixed reactions from legal luminaries with some hailing them as 'significant step' towards modernising criminal justice system while others terming them as 'draconian' and 'cosmetic'.

The new laws- Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) came into effect across the country from 1 July and replaced the Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and Indian Evidence

PHOTO: PTI

Act respectively.

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi said an opportunity to make genuine reforms has been wasted and "cosmetic changes" have been brought about in new laws, disregarding the crucial aspect of huge pendency of cases in courts, especially in trial courts.

Advocate and Congress MP Manish Tewari termed the new laws "pernicious in nature, draconian in their implementation". Activist lawyer Kamini Jaiswal concurred with Tewari and termed them as "disaster". "From today, two parallel systems will be in play. All those cases registered before 30 June midnight will be prosecuted under the old system and those cases registered after 30 June midnight will be prosecuted under the new system. There are 3.4 crore pending cases and a bulk of them are criminal cases. So, there is going to be utter confusion," Tewari added. *—PTI*

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Karnataka govt opposes new laws

Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil on Monday opposed the three new criminal laws saying the Centre did not take its suggestions into consideration. "We gave a total of 23 suggestions but the central government did not take any of it seriously. No opinion of ours is included in it," the Minister said.

With Rs 21K cr, K'taka is 2nd largest GST collector

KASHMIRA DUTTA
BENGALURU, 1 JULY

Karnataka is the second largest State in terms of tax collection from Goods and Service Tax (GST) after Maharashtra.

The State celebrated the seventh anniversary of National Goods & Service Tax Day commemorating the successful implementation of GST, at the Income tax Office, in Bengaluru.

The theme for the event was 'Sashakt Bharat, Samagra Vikaas' and it discussed the achievements as well as the challenges faced by the State in terms of implementation, collection, classification and evaluation of GST. The major challenges faced by the State in terms of implementation and collection of GST were to balance the convergence of the financial sector with the technological sector. The event appreciated the efforts of 2,500 tax officials who collected Rs 1 lakh crore of the State's contribution t. "The State collected Rs 76,000 crore revenue from GST in 2023 with a growth rate of 23 per cent. In the last three months, the State collected Rs 21,000 crore with 12 per cent growth rate. With over 4.1 lakh taxpayers, State is the third largest zone in terms of taxpayers. Krishna Dixit, High Court Judge said, 'The tax that is collected by the officers in excess of what the law has sanctioned needs to be discharged and the taxpayers need to be treated with respect.' *—Salar News*

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PHOTO: PTI

Thief held for stealing 79 printers from govt offices

CHIKKAMAGALURU, 1 JULY

Kadur police on Monday arrested a thief for stealing printers from government offices, and recovered 79 printers worth Rs 6.30 lakh. The accused Akash worked as a data entry operator in Ammasandra, Turuvekere. He allegedly stole the printers from MESCOM offices, girls' colleges, and institutions in Tiptur, Srirangapatna, Tumakuru, and Kadur. His modus operandi was to steal the printers during morning cleaning hours in the offices. He was arrested after his activities were captured on CCTV cameras, leading to his identification. *—Salar News*

Man flaunts AK 47 on Instagram reels, later held

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

A man was arrested after flaunting an AK-47 gun in Instagram reels in Bengaluru, on Monday. The Kothanur police detained the accused, identified as Arun Katare and sent him to Parappana Agrahara jail. Katare's behavior was reported to the police by concerned residents, leading to his arrest under the new Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. This new law allows residents to file First Information Reports (FIR) online and report crimes from outside the City without an FIR. Despite the gun being fake, Katare was charged under sections of the Arms Act and IPC for causing public panic. Known as the "King of Reels," Katare has a history of criminal activities. He was previously jailed for allegedly threatening and robbing an SSLC student of 656 grams of gold, forcing the boy to smoke, and drink . *—Salar News*

Major Gen Mathew is General Officer Commanding

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

Major General VT Mathew has taken over as the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of State and Kerala Sub Area. A statement from the Ministry of Defence said, Major General Ravi Murugan, General Officer Commanding(GOC) Karnataka and Kerala Sub Area, after having served for 37 years of meritorious service in Indian Army relinquished the command on 1 July and handed over the baton to the Major General VT Mathew. Dehradun. He was commissioned into 11 MADRAS Regiment in December 1988. The General Officer was the Major General Staff (MGGS) (Doctrine), HQ Army Training Command (ARTRAC) in his previous assignment before taking over as General Officer Commanding(GOC) Karnataka and Kerala Sub Area, the statement added. *—PTI*

Kannada activists protest for job reservations, give 30 days to govt

Activists say if the demand is unmet the govt will witness violent protests

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

The Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) (Karave) and the Karnataka Defence Forum, along with numerous other pro-Kannada organisations, organised a State-wide protest demanding the State government provide job reservations for Kannadigas.

The protests erupted in multiple cities like Bengaluru, Mysuru, Hubballi, and Mangaluru and held a Statewide 'Dharana Satyagraha'. They demanded the immediate formulation and implementation of legislation in the State.

Addressing the media, KRV President TA Narayana Gowda said, "We have organised this peaceful protest to demand 100 per cent full employment for all Kannadigas. The employment rates for Kannadigas are not high enough. By doing this the employers are betraying their people. We will be giving the government one month time to implement these demands.

Kannada activists demand employment for Kannadigas and protest at Freedom Park, in Bengaluru on Monday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

If our demand is unmet, we will turn this protest violent."

In the petition that was submitted to the Chief Minister, the petitioners demanded that the State government should pass a law under the Industrial Employment Standing Orders Act of 1946 to mandate job reservations for Kannadigas. It highlights the rich cultural heritage of Karnataka and the pride Kannadigas take in their language and history.

One protestor told **Salar News**, "The protestors argue that the influx of migrants from northern and northeastern states has put immense pressure on local job markets, increasing unemployment among the locals." "Private organisations established on our land are hiring HR officers from other states, who in turn, bring their people, sidelining our youth," said another protester. *—Salar News*

THE LIST OF DEMANDS INCLUDE

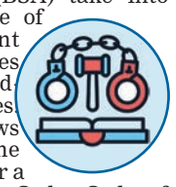
- A written test is mandatory for those who want any kind of jobs in State and those passing it should be considered Kannadigas. The person should reside here for 15 years
- 100% reservation for Kannadigas in C and D Grade posts for all pvt firms
- 80% reservation in other posts for all pvt firms
- Institutions that fail to adhere to these regulations would face severe penalties, including license revocation
- Kannada development authority should be granted more power to enforce laws

All cops given training on new criminal laws: DGP

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

All police officers and staff in Karnataka have been given training on the new criminal laws which came into effect in the country on Monday, state DGP Alok Mohan said.

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) take into account some of the current social realities and modern-day crimes.



The new laws replaced the British-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively. From Monday, all fresh FIRs will be registered under the BNS. However, cases filed earlier will continue to be tried under the old laws till their final disposals.

The new laws brought in a modern justice system, incorporating provisions such as Zero FIR, online registration of police complaints, summonses through electronic modes such as SMS and mandatory videography of crime scenes for all heinous crimes, it was noted. *—PTI*

Leadership change decision in high command's hand: CM

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said he would abide by the decision of Congress high command on the issue of leadership change, amid a political tussle within the ruling party.

A Vokkaliga seer last week publicly requested Siddaramaiah to step down and make way for his Deputy DK Shivakumar.

"It is not a matter to be discussed in public," Siddaramaiah told reporters when asked about Vishwa Vokkaligara Mahasamsthana Mutt seer Chandrashekhara Swami's appeal.

> I don't want to comment on what Swamiji says. Ours is a national party. There is a high command
>
> -Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

There have also been demands by some Ministers perceived to be close to Siddaramaiah to create more posts of Deputy Chief Minister and given to leaders from Lingayat, SC, ST, and minority communities. There was reportedly stiff competition between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar for the Chief Minister's post after the declaration of Assembly election results in May last year, and Congress had managed to convince the latter and made him the Deputy Chief Minister.

There were some reports at the time that a compromise had been reached based on a "rotational chief minister formula.

Siddaramaiah also underlined the need to check the spread of fake news as it can cause trouble in the society.Society will benefit if the media including the social media is used for telling the truth; spreading fake news can cause trouble in the society," he said. Siddaramaiah said he has stopped watching social media. *—PTI*

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah *PHOTO: SALAR*

ESHWARAPPA: GOT A CALL FROM BJP TO REJOIN PARTY

SHIVAMOGGA, 1 JULY

Expelled BJP leader KS Eshwarappa on Monday said he has been invited by the saffron party to rejoin it. He, however, said he is not in a hurry to join the party and would discuss it before taking a call.

"A few BJP leaders approached me, asking to rejoin the party. I haven't decided yet. I am not in a hurry," Eshwarappa said.

Eshwarappa had rebelled against the party and contested the Lok Sabha election ignoring the party high command's direction.

He who held several key positions including the Deputy Chief Minister, Leader of Opposition in the Karnataka Legislative Council and BJP State President, was upset when the party denied his son KE Kantesh a ticket in the recent Lok Sabha election to contest from Haveri Lok Sabha seat. *—PTI*

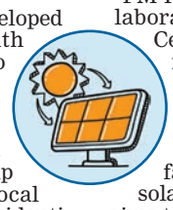
TO BOOST ENERGY SECTOR

State to get new solar park in Tumakuru

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

Energy Minister KJ George, unveiled plans for a new solar park to enhance the State's renewable energy capacity, in Madhugiri, Tumakuru, on Monday.

The park will be developed in collaboration with Tehri Hydro Development Corporation India Limited (THDCIL), a Central government entity. This partnership aims to utilise local resources effectively to identify suitable land parcels for advancing State's renewable energy objectives, ensuring sustainable development.



George also reviewed the progress of KUSUM-C project, which aims to empower farmers through solar pumps and grid-connected solar power plants. "Under the KUSUM-C project, we aim to install solar power plants requiring 4-5 acres of land to generate 1 MW of electricity. Government land will be provided free of cost for a 25-year lease, with lessees paying Rs. 25,000 per acre annually," said George.

PM KUSUM initiative, a collaborative effort between Centre and State government, seeks to transform agricultural practices by ensuring reliable and sustainable energy sources for farmers. By promoting solar power adoption, State aims to reduce dependency on traditional energy sources and contribute to environmental conservation.

The meeting was also attended by State Home Minister G Parameshwar, who is also the district in-charge minister, cooperation minister KN Rajanna, special representative in Delhi TB Jayachandra , and others. *—Salar News*

KPCC team to review LS results

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

- Shivakumar noted that the results of the Karnataka Lok Sabha election were unsatisfactory, with the expectation of winning over 15 seats not being met

The Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) formed new divisions for the fact-finding committee to analyse the party's performance in the recent Lok Sabha elections, where the expected number of seats was not secured.

Speaking at a media conference at the KPCC office on Monday, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said, "Now the Transport, Slum, Cooperative, and Apartment Residents Welfare departments will analyse their problems and party's performance. Office bearers will be appointed at the district and block levels along with a department. This will create convenience for the residents facing many problems and the new sections for auto drivers will be started."

"One of the teams has already submitted a report on Shiggaon constituency. The Sandur constituency report will be submitted by July 3. Minister Chaluvarayaswamy will submit a report on the Channapatna constituency," he said.

He highlighted the need to review why the party lost and the committee will study and report on each assembly constituency.

Shivakumar noted that the results of the Karnataka Lok Sabha election were unsatisfactory, with the expectation of winning over 15 seats not being met. The party managed to secure only two seats.

Party meetings are now mandated to be held at the party office or Kalyana Mandapam, not at MLA's houses, to ensure all office bearers attend.

District and block Congress presidents who have served for five years and two terms have been asked to submit proposals for change.

He also instructed that the district ministers will visit the party workers once every 15 days at the district centre and once a month in the City. *—Salar News*

NATIONAL DOCTORS' DAY

A group of doctors were felicitated with lifetime achievement awards on National Doctors' Day function held at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, on Monday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

Suraj Revanna's CID custody extended till 3 July

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

A Bengaluru court on Monday extended Criminal Investigation Department (CID) custody of JD(S) MLC Suraj Revanna, who was arrested last month in a sexual abuse case, till 3 July.

The police have filed an FIR against him under IPC sections 377 (unnatural offence), 342 (wrongful confinement), 506 (criminal intimidation), and 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention).

He was arrested on 22 June on a complaint by a 27-year-old man who alleged that he was sexually assaulted on 16 June at the former's farmhouse in Ghannikada in Hassan district.

On 23 June, he was remanded to eight days' CID custody, which ended on Monday.

Accordingly, CID produced Revanna before the magistrate, who extended his remand by two more days.

Suraj Revanna *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

On 25 June, the police registered a second case of sexual abuse against him. The complainant alleged that he was sexually abused by the accused three years ago.

The MLC is elder brother of former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing cases of rape and sexual abuse, and grand-son of former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda. *—PTI*

TO CURB VIOLATIONS

250 AI cameras installed in B'luru-Mysuru Expressway

MYSURU, 1 JULY

Bengaluru traffic police has installed 250 Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras and 80 Red Light Violation Detection (RRVD) cameras at 50 junctions on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway to prevent traffic violations and reduce road accidents.

The initiative is part of the Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS). The new system aims to enhance the police's ability to curb traffic violations.

Now, similar technology is being extended to major roads in Mysuru, with an investment of Rs 8.5 crore, covering both Mysuru City and district.

The ITMS includes cameras and speed guns to take swift action against violators and reduce fines for traffic violations processed through FASTag. This initiative follows the initial launch of ITMS in December 2022.

PHOTO: X/@NITIN_GADKARI

According to the new system, violators will receive SMS notifications for traffic rule breaches. The cameras will also be installed in various areas of Mysuru district, including Hunsur, HD Kote, Nanjangudu, and T Narsipur.

Traffic and Road Safety ADGP Alok Kumar has proposed installing ITMS cameras on four major highways connecting Bengaluru to nearby taluks and districts: Tumkuru Road, Kanakapura Road, Hosur Road, and Hoskote. Additionally, variable messaging signs will be added to these roads to display real-time traffic information. The proposal has been approved by the State Road Transport Authority, and the tender process will begin in July.

The State police's traffic and road safety department held a meeting with the regional NHAI officer on 1 June regarding the ITMS project in Gadag town. The ADGP is also considering writing to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for support. *—Salar News*

MANGALURU YAKSHAGANA ARTISTES TO PERFORM IN THE US

MANGALURU, 1 JULY

Representational Image *PHOTO: X@KARNATAKATOURISM*

A team of talented Yakshaghana artistes from Dakshina Kannada is all set to take the popular traditional art form to the US.

Organised by the Yakshadruva Patla Foundation Trust USA, this cultural exchange aims to showcase the rich heritage of Yakshagana.

Addressing a press conference here, Aravinda Upadhyay, president of the USA unit of Yakshadruva Patla Foundation Trust, expressed his gratitude to Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji of Puttige Mutt for the recognition by the US government.

The team, led by prominent figures such Sridhara Alva, Mahabala Shetty, and Uli Yogendra Bhat, has scheduled performances in major cities across 20 states in the US.

Background artists Patla Satish Shetty, Padmanabha Upadhyay, and Chaitanya Krishna Padyana will join the nine-member troupe on an art tour spanning approximately 75 days.

Cooperation from Puttige Matha, Kannada group members, Yakshagana Sangh, temples, and other organisations will enhance the success of their mythological storytelling performances. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Despite diversities, India is one: RSS's Mohan Bhagwat

GHAZIPUR, 1 JULY

Despite its differences, India has functioned as one nation for thousands of years and this unity was apparent whenever it faced attacks from Pakistan or China, RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat said on Monday at the launch of a book on war hero Abdul Hamid in Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh. The event was held at Ghazipur's Dhamapur village, where Hamid was born. The soldier was posthumously bestowed with the Param Vir Chakra for his bravery during the India-Pakistan war in 1965. He said whatever might appear from the ouside, "love and devotion for the country is prevalent everywhere". "Despite all differences, India has been functioning as one country for thousands of years, and we are one country and one society," he said. *—PTI*

TMC's Saket asked to pay ₹50L in defamation case

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Delhi High Court directed TMC leader Saket Gokhale on Monday to apologise and pay Rs 50 lakh damages to former diplomat Lakshmi Murdeshwar Puri, the wife of Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri, for his defamatory tweets against her over the purchase of a property in Switzerland. Hearing the defamation lawsuit filed by the former assistant secretary general of the United Nations, Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani also restrained the TMC Member of Parliament from publishing any more content on any social media or electronic platform concerning his imputation. "The offending tweets are per se defamatory; that the plaintiff has suffered undeserved legal injury to her reputation which warrants redressal," the court ruled. *—PTI*

Delhi HC seeks police's stand on Bhibhav's plea

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Delhi High Court on Monday held as maintainable a plea moved by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's close aide Bibhav Kumar, challenging his arrest in connection with the alleged assault on AAP MP Swati Maliwal at the Chief Minister's residence and sought the stand of the city police on it. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, who had on 31 May reserved the order on the maintainability of Kumar's petition, issued a notice in the matter. Kumar, presently in judicial custody, allegedly assaulted Maliwal at Kejriwal's official residence on 13 May. He was arrested on 18 May. *—PTI*

Congress man's brother shot dead in Faridabad

FARIDABAD, 1 JULY

The brother of a local Congress leader was allegedly shot dead here over a rivalry involving monetary transactions, police said on Monday. Kunal Bhandana,32, a resident of Nawada Koh village, was killed at around 11.15pm on Sunday near Masjid Chowk here, the police said. According to the complaint filed by the victim's brother and local Congress leader, Jyotender Bhadana alias Rinku Bhadana, Kunal was standing near Masjid Chowk with a friend when Vijay, Billu and two others reached there and started arguing with him. Jyotender Bhadana said that his brother had an ongoing rivalry with Vijay and Billu. Following the Congress leader's complaint, an FIR was registered against Vijay, Billu and two others under sections 302 (murder) and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code as well as the Arms Act at Dabua police station on Monday, the police said. *—PTI*

Stop misusing agencies to silence Oppn: INDIA bloc

Kharge says NDA 3.0 marred with paper leaks, terror attacks

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Several INDIA bloc MPs staged a protest in Parliament premises on Monday against the alleged misuse of probe agencies by the government to "target" Opposition leaders.

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and several leaders of the INDIA bloc, including those from the TMC and AAP, participated in the protest on the steps leading to the Makar Dwar in Parliament.

The Opposition leaders carried placards which read "stop misusing agencies to silence opposition" and "BJP mein jao bhrashtachar ka licence pao (Join the BJP and get a licence for corruption)".

AAP MP Raghav Chadha held a poster that showed Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal standing behind bars.

Opposition MPs raised slogans demanding release of three arrested ministers in West Bengal, and stopping "misuse" of the ED against Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav, and against former Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren.

NDA's 3rd term a disaster, says Kharge

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge took potshot at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement that last 10 years of his rule was just a trailer and 'picture abhi baaki hai', saying the third term of NDA has seen exam paper leaks, terror attack in J&K, train accident, airport canopy collapse, bridges cave-ins and toll tax hike. *—PTI*

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi with other Opposition MPs protest against probe agencies in New Delhi on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

CHAIR HAS NO SWITCH TO TURN OFF MICS, SAYS OM BIRLA

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday said the presiding officers do not have any switch or remote control to turn off the microphones of members raising issues in the House. Birla took objection to members casting aspersions on the Chair by alleging that when they rise to speak in the House, their microphones are turned off by the presiding officers. *—PTI*

> **I noticed something. When I shook your hand, you stood straight and shook my hand. When Modi ji shook your hand, you bowed down and shook his hand**
>
> -Rahul Gandhi, Congress MP

> **Prime Minister is the Leader of House. My culture and traditions say, in personal as well as public life, and on this seat, I should bow to those who are elders and those who are equal should be treated equally**
>
> -Om Birla, LS Speaker

Supreme Court *PHOTO: PTI*

Excise case: HC rejects bail pleas of BRS leader Kavitha

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Delhi High Court on Monday dismissed BRS leader K Kavitha's bail pleas in two cases of corruption and money laundering linked to the alleged excise policy scam.

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, who had reserved the order on the two bail pleas of Kavitha on 28 May, rejected the petitions.

Kavitha had challenged the trial court's 6 May order by which her bail applications in the CBI's corruption case as well as the ED's money-laundering case were dismissed.

K Kavitha *PHOTO: PTI*

Kavitha's lawyer submitted that of the 50 accused in the excise case, she is the lone woman and urged the court to consider granting her bail as law keeps women on a different pedestal. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) opposed Kavitha's bail pleas, saying she is powerful enough to influence witnesses.

Kavitha is in judicial custody in the two cases.

The "scam" pertains to alleged corruption and money laundering in the formulation and implementation of the Delhi government's excise policy for 2021-22 that was later scrapped.

The ED arrested Kavitha,46, from her Banjara Hills residence in Hyderabad on 15 March. The CBI arrested her in the Tihar jail. *—PTI*

NEET-UG ROW: SC TO HEAR PLEA AFTER TWO WEEKS

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday posted for hearing after two weeks a plea alleging OMR sheet manipulation in the controversy-ridden NEET-UG, 2024.

The plea came up for hearing before a vacation bench of Justice CT Ravikumar and Justice Manoj Misra.

The counsel appearing for the petitioner, who had taken the medical entrance exam, alleged that his OMR sheet was swapped. The bench told the counsel that the petitioner was seeking permission to appear in the retest that was held on 23 June. The petitioner's counsel said several other petitions alleging irregularities and also seeking cancellation of National Eligibility cum Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG), 2024, were pending before the apex court. The students, who have been been staging a sit-in at the Jantar Mantar here against the irregularities in the exams have called for a march towards the Parliament on Tuesday to press their demands.

Students under the banner "India against NTA" gathered at the protest site to continue their agitation against alleged rigging. *—PTI*

PRAYER FOR PAY

Kerala government employees during their protest 'Shayanapradikshanam' demanding for 'Pay Revision' during rains, in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday. 'Shayanapradikshanam', a temple ritual is done in a lying posture, with forehead, chest, stomach, hands, knees and toes touching the ground. In this pose, they circle around *PHOTO: PTI*

Andhra govt hikes pension from ₹3,000 to ₹4,000

GUNTUR, 1 JULY

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu on Monday launched the 'NTR Bharosa' pension scheme by personally distributing the pension to beneficiaries at Penumaka village in the Mangalagiri Assembly segment of Guntur District.

Under the revised scheme, pension for the senior citizens has been increased from Rs 3,000 to Rs 4,000.

Accompanied by Nara Lokesh, MLA of Mangalagiri, and Minister in the Andhra Pradesh Cabinet, Chandrababu Naidu drove straight to the hut of Islavath Sai in Penumaka. He handed over the pension to her, her father Banavath Pamulyanayak, and his wife Banavath Sita, all three of whom are daily-wage earners.

Beneficiaries of the scheme will get Rs 7,000 in July, including arrears for three months. From August the benefeciaries will receive Rs 4,000 per month.

Individuals with disabilities will receive Rs 6,000 per month and those with chronic illnesses will be given Rs 10,000 per mont. The total pension distributed on Monday to 65.31 lakh beneficiaries across 28 categories amounted to over Rs 4,408 crore. *—ANI*

Editors Guild seeks media access to Parliament

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Editors Guild of India on Monday urged Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar to remove access restrictions on the media for covering proceedings of Parliament.

The Guild, in a letter to Birla, said the practice of restricting the number of media persons, including those holding permanent accreditation, came into force when Covid19 protocols were in place.

"The country has fought the scourge and moved on and we hope limiting access is also done away with," it said in a letter to Birla.

The Guild also expressed concern over the non-reconstitution of the Press Advisory Committee that was first founded in 1929 under the guidance of the president of the Central Legislative Assembly, Vithalbhai Patel.

The Guild urged Dhankhar to restore complete access to all media accredited media persons to the House without the need for them to secure additional access passes, which only adds to the bureaucratic work at a time when the effort is to reduce the load. *—PTI*

MORAL POLICING

NHRC gives WB notice over 'public flogging' of couple

A couple allegedly engaged in an illicit relationship being assaulted by TMC leader Tajmul in Uttar Dinajpur district, West Bengal *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

KOLKATA, 1 JULY

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) said on Monday that it has issued notices to the West Bengal government and the state's police chief over reports that a couple was allegedly mercilessly beaten up in a village in Uttar Dinajpur district in full public view by a group of people.

The main perpetrator is allegedly associated with "the political party in power in West Bengal" and could be seen in a viral video, severely beating up the couple surrounded by a group of people, as spectators, NHRC said in a statement.

The media report also quoted a video of the incident on social media, it added.

The alleged public flogging of the couple in Lakshmipur village of Chopra division in Uttar Dinajpur district has sparked an outrage, with Governor CV Ananda Bose seeking a report from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, while the BJP accused the ruling TMC of "unleashing Taliban rule" in the state.

The man seen in the viral video beating up the couple with a bamboo stick was identified as Tajmul alias 'JCB', purportedly a TMC leader of Chopra area. He was arrested last night.

The Commission has taken suo motu cognisance of the couple who was mercilessly beaten up in Uttar Dinajpur district in full public view, by a group of people, the statement said.

According to the media report carried on 30 June, the allegations of a love affair between the victim couple were discussed in an open meeting (panchayat) by the annoyed villagers. Then, the miscreants started beating the duo, it said. Accordingly, the Commission has issued notices to the chief secretary and the director general of police of West Bengal, seeking a detailed report within one week. It should include the status of the police investigation, the health status of the victims and medical treatment if any, provided to them, the statement said. *—PTI*

Don't misinform: Rlys to Ramesh's claim

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Railway Ministry has dismissed a claim made by Congress leader Jairam Ramesh that the Delhi Police filed first FIR under Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita 2023 against a street vendor for obstruction under a foot-over bridge of New Delhi Railway Station.

"First FIR has already been filed under Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita 2023. It is by the Delhi police against a street vendor for obstruction, after he was earning his daily livelihood under a foot-over bridge of New Delhi Railway Station," Ramesh said on X. Railway Ministry attached a letter of Station House Officer of New Delhi Railway Station police station which dismissed the information. *—PTI*

Kejriwal moves HC against arrest by CBI

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Arvind Kejriwal *PHOTO: PTI*

The Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday approached Delhi High Court against his arrest by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in Excise Policy case. He has also challenged the Rouse Avenue Court Court's order of 26 June, sending him to three days of Custodial remand to CBI and observing his arrest legal.

The CBI alleged that during the police custody remand, the accused Arvind Kejriwal has been examined/ interrogated. However, he did not co-operate with the investigation and deliberately gave evasive replies contrary to the evidences on record.

On being confronted with the evidences, he did not give proper and truthful explanation regarding the enhancement of the profit margin for wholesalers from 5 per cent to 12 per cent under new Excise Policy of Delhi 2021-22, without any study or justification, said CBI.

He also could not explain as to why during the peak of 2nd wave of Covid, the Cabinet approval for revised Excise Policy was obtained through circulation in hurried manner within 01 day, when the accused persons of the South Group were camping in Delhi and holding meetings with his close associate Vijay Nair.

He evaded the questions regarding the meetings of his associate Vijay Nair with various stake holders of liquor business in Delhi and demanding illegal gratification from them for favourable provisions in the upcoming Excise Policy, the CBI added. *—ANI*

OVERHAUL OF JUSTICE SYSTEM

'New laws available in regional languages'

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday that the three new criminal laws will be available in all regional languages, including Tamil, and if anyone has any issue regarding the names of the laws, there should have been a combined effort.

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) came into effect on Monday.

The new laws replaced the British-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act respectively. "I want to say one thing that the entire law will be made available in Tamil and the proceedings will also be in Tamil. If you still have any objection regarding the name, then for it there should have been a combined effort. I appeal to the stakeholders to come forward with their grievances," Shah said at a press conference here. He was replying to a question on objections raised, including MPs from Tamil Nadu, to the new laws being named in Hindi. The home minister said these laws will be available in all languages listed in the Constitution's Eighth Schedule. "If they have any opposition to the name, they can raise it by meeting me. Neither the Tamil Nadu Chief minister nor these MPs have sought time to meet me," Shah said. *—PTI*

Amit Shah *PHOTO: PTI*

> **I want to say one thing that the entire law will be made available in Tamil. If you still have any objection, then for it there should have been a combined effort**
>
> -Amit Shah, Home Minister

PHOTO: PTI

Canopy collapse: MoCA reviews ops at Delhi airport

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Days after the canopy collapse incident at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport, Union Minister of Civil Aviation Ram Mohan Naidu on Monday visited the Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC) to take stock of the operations. Union Minister Naidu held a meeting with senior officials from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, DGCA, BCAS, DIAL, and airline operators on Sunday. The meeting focused on reviewing current operations and passenger handling following the transition of flights from Terminal 1 to Terminals 2 and 3. A comprehensive assessment was conducted, involving detailed discussions on ensuring smooth functioning and deploying additional manpower to manage increased passenger flow. —*ANI*

Beed sarpanch killed; NCP(SP) leader booked

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 1 JULY

A sarpanch of a village was shot and killed, and another person was injured after they were attacked allegedly by an office-bearer of the Nationalist Congress Party (SP) and his aides in Maharashtra's Beed district, police said on Monday. A case has been registered against NCP (SP) leader Shashikant alias Baban Gitte and four of his aides for the incident that occurred in the Bank Colony area of Parli tehsil on Saturday, an official said. The victims, Bapurao Andhale, the sarpanch of Maralwadi village, and Gyanba Gitte, went to the home of one of the accused persons, and a quarrel ensued between Andhale and Shashikant, he said. Shashikant allegedly took out his pistol and fired at Bapurao, after which his aide Rajabhau Neharkar killed him. —*PTI*

90 ill after drinking contaminated water in M'rashtra

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 1 JULY

Ninety three persons have suffered from stomach infections after apparently consuming contaminated water from a well at a village in Maharashtra's Nanded district, officials said on Monday. The Mugaon Tanda village, where the incident took place, has 107 houses with a population of 440, as per the officials. Ninety three persons approached a local health centre on June 26 and 27 with complaints of abdominal pain and loose motions, district health officer Balaji Shinde told PTI. While 56 patients were treated in the Mugaon Tanda village, 37 others were referred to a primary health centre in neighbouring Manjaram village and later discharged, he said. —*PTI*

Sleepwalker dies after falling from Mumbai building

MUMBAI, 1 JULY

A 19-year-old man having the sleepwalking condition died after falling from the sixth floor of a building in Mumbai, police said on Monday. The incident took place at around 5 am on Sunday at the Aqua Gem Tower on Nesbit Road in Mazgaon area in south Mumbai, an official said. Mustafa Ibrahim Chunawala was found lying unconscious at the podium on the building's third floor, he said. After receiving information, police reached the spot and rushed the man to Saifi Hospital where doctors declared him dead before arrival, the official said. Chunawala was having the issue of 'somnambulism' (sleepwalking), he said. The Byculla police have registered a case of accidental death, the official said, adding a probe was underway into the case. —*PTI*

India records below-normal rain in June: IMD

Meanwhile, heavy rain lashes AP; Roads cave-in in Gujarat, Modi assures support to Assam

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

India recorded below-normal rainfall in June, with the deficit standing at 11 per cent, the highest in five years, the India Meteorological Department said on Monday.

According to the IMD data, the country received 147.2 mm of rainfall against a normal of 165.3 mm for the month, the seventh lowest since 2001.

June rainfall accounts for 15 per cent of the total precipitation of 87 cm recorded during the four-month monsoon season in the country.

After making an early onset over Kerala and the northeastern region on May 30, and progressing normally up to Maharashtra, the monsoon lost momentum, extending the wait for rains in West Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh, and worsening the impact of a scorching heat wave in northwest India.

The IMD reported that northwest India recorded a 33 per cent rainfall deficit, central India a 14 per cent deficit, and east and northeast India a 13 per cent deficit. Only south India recorded surplus rains (14 per cent) in June. The Met office stated that 12 per cent of the sub-divisional area of the country experienced excess to large excess rainfall, 38 per cent received normal rainfall, and 50 per cent experienced deficient to large deficient rainfall. —*PTI*

People use a makeshift raft to help a woman and a baby safely cross flood waters following heavy rainfall, in Nagaon, Assam, on Monday PHOTO: PTI

26% OF ASSAM FOREST CAMPS SUBMERGED

GOLAGHAT/JORHAT, 1 JULY

With worsening flood condition in Assam, rising water levels have impacted more than 26 per cent of the 233 forest camps at Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, an official report said on Monday.

As a significant portion of wildlife habitat is now submerged, scores of animals have started crossing the National Highway-715 in search of higher ground towards the southern direction in East Karbi Anglong district. However, no death of animals has been reported as of now due to the floods or accidents while crossing the highway. Floodwaters have submerged a total of 61 forest camps across Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, according to a flood report. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday enquired about the prevailing flood situation in Assam and assured of all support to handle the crisis, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. —*PTI*

CROCODILE'S NIGHT OUT

The video of an 8-foot-long crocodile strolling on a rain-swept road in a coastal Maharashtra town has gone viral on social media. The video was shot by an autorickshaw driver in Chinchnaka area of Chiplun town in Ratnagiri district amid a steady downpour, an official said. A few other vehicles are also seen in the video, which shows an autorickshaw trying tail the crocodile with its headlight on.

PHOTO: VIDEOGRAB

A car gets stuck after a road caves in in Gujarat's Gandhinagar on Monday due to heavy rainfall PHOTO: PTI

RAINS WREAK HAVOC IN ARUNACHAL

ITANAGAR, 1 JULY

Incessant rains triggered landslides and floods in several districts of Arunachal Pradesh on Monday, throwing life out of gear, officials said.

All the major rivers in the state are in spate and flowing above the danger mark, they said. The overflowing Kameng river swept away several houses at Seppa, the headquarters of the East Kameng district. However, there was no report of any casualty.

A landslide that happened in the Division IV area of the state capital damaged several buildings and buried a car. A woman who was driving the car managed a miraculous escape, police said. The important Kurung bridge was washed away on Sunday, snapping connectivity to the Kurung Kumey district, Koloriang MLA Pani Taram said. Flood waters submerged low-lying areas of Pasighat, Ruksin, Mirem and Bilat areas of East Siang, and parts of Lower Siang district, officials said. —*PTI*

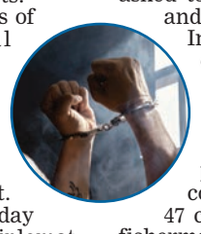
India, Pak exchange lists of prisoners, fishermen: MEA

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

India and Pakistan on Monday exchanged the lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen in each other's custody, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said and added that 2,639 Indian fishermen and 71 civilian prisoners have been repatriated from Pakistan since 2014 as a result of New Delhi's sustained efforts.

Under the provisions of the bilateral Agreement on Consular Access 2008, such lists are exchanged every year on 1 January and 1 July, the MEA said in a statement. "India and Pakistan today exchanged, through diplomatic channels simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad, the lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen in each other's custody," it said.

India has shared the names of 366 civilian prisoners and 86 fishermen in its custody who are Pakistani or are believed-to-be-Pakistani. Similarly, Pakistan has shared the names of 43 civilian prisoners and 211 fishermen in its custody who are Indian or are believed-to-be-Indian, the MEA added.



The government of India has called for "early release and repatriation" of civilian prisoners, fishermen along with their boats and missing Indian defence personnel from Pakistan's custody, the ministry said. "Pakistan has been asked to expedite the release and repatriation of 185 Indian fishermen and civilian prisoners, who have completed their sentence. In addition, Pakistan has been asked to provide immediate consular access to the 47 civilian prisoners and fishermen in Pakistan's custody, who are believed-to-be-Indian and have not been provided consular access so far," the statement said.

Pakistan has been requested to ensure the safety, security and welfare of all Indian and believed-to-be-Indian civilian prisoners and fishermen, pending their release and repatriation to India, it said. —*PTI*

NAXALITES KILL BROTHER OF COP IN CHHATTISGARH

NARAYANPUR, 1 JULY

Naxalites abducted a policeman's brother and killed him in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district while claiming he was a police informer, an official said on Monday. The body of Sannu Usendi, 30, was found on Sunday night at Batumpara Chowk in Orchha village of the district, a police official here said. He was the brother of a constable of Bastar Fighters- unit of state police, the official said. Usendi, a resident of Kohkameta area in district, was staying in Narayanpur and running a small tea shop, he said. —*PTI*

Army ready to face all challenges, says Chief

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Indian Army is ready and capable to face all current and future security challenges facing India, Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi said on Monday amid the lingering border row with China in eastern Ladakh.

A day after he assumed charge of the 1.3 million-strong force, Gen Dwivedi said working towards ensuring synergy among the Army, Air Force and the Navy would be one of his priorities. In remarks to the media after inspecting a guard of honour at the South Block in Raisina hills, he said the Army is facing "unique operational challenges" and to remain prepared for such threats, it is crucial to continue equipping the soldiers with latest weapons.

"I am fully conscious of the responsibility assigned to me and I assure the country and fellow citizens that the Indian Army is fully capable and ready to face all current and future challenges," he said. The newly-appointed Army Chief also said that he will encourage induction of indigenously-built military hardware into the force to boost self-reliance in defence. "The geo-political landscape is changing rapidly and technology is evolving at a very fast pace," he said. Gen Dwivedi said the Indian Army is on the "path to transformation" and it aspires to be 'Atmanirbhar' (self-reliant) in defence. "To achieve this, we will encourage indigenous initiatives and induct maximum war systems and equipment that are manufactured in our country," he said. —*PTI*

Upendra Dwivedi PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Vijayan launches 4-year undergrad programmes

T'PURAM, 1 JULY

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday officially launched four-year undergraduate programmes in all universities in the state and said it would bring landmark changes in the higher education sector, which has been witnessing greater changes all over the world. He said the conventional modes of learning have changed and the higher education sector is becoming an area of skill development, employment training and knowledge generation.

The undergraduate programmes and the courses in the state were revised in accordance with the changes happening in the higher education sector, which is enjoying top priority in the state, he said. The Chief MInister said the new reforms would bring greater changes in the content and structure of the higher education sector of the state, which was once confined to learning from college campuses alone. Under the new four-year undergraduate programmes, divergent areas, including online platforms, practical training, and field visits would get equal importance, he explained. Vijayan inaugurated the new programme at a function held at the Government College for Women here. —*PTI*

Porsche case: Pune cops to move SC

PUNE, 1 JULY

Pune police are planning to approach the Supreme Court against the Bombay High Court order for the release of a 17-year-old boy allegedly involved in the Porsche car accident here in May, a senior official said on Monday.

The HC on 25 June directed that the boy be released immediately, saying the Juvenile Justice Board's (JJB) orders remanding him to an observation home were illegal and the law regarding juveniles must be implemented fully.

The teenager, who got bail hours after the accident on 19 May, was sent to the observation home in Maharashtra's Pune city three days later following an outcry.

After the HC order last week, the juvenile was released from the observation home and his custody was handed over to his paternal aunt.

PHOTO: PTI

- The Pune police are planning to approach the Supreme Court against the Bombay HC order, Commissioner of Police Amitesh Kumar told PTI on Monday

The Pune police are planning to approach the Supreme Court against the Bombay HC order, Commissioner of Police Amitesh Kumar told PTI on Monday.

As per the police, the teen was drunk and driving the luxury car belonging to his father, a real estate businessman, when it hit a two-wheeler in Kalyani Nagar area of Pune in the early hours of May 19, killing two IT professionals.

The juvenile's parents and grandfather are currently in jail in two different cases pertaining to the incident, including one of alleged swapping of blood samples of the boy and another case of alleged kidnapping and wrongful confinement of a family driver, who was threatened to take the blame that he was behind the wheels when the accident took place. —*PTI*

'Vandalism' at place of worship in J&K

REASI/JAMMU, 1 JULY

Three more people were detained by police in connection with the alleged vandalism at a place of worship in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, where normal life was hit by a shutdown as local residents protested against the incident, officials said.

The place of worship was found vandalised by a visitor in a village in the Dharmari area on Saturday evening, sparking tension and protests.

Police registered an FIR under relevant sections of law and formed a Special Investigation Team headed by a deputy superintendent of Police to identify and arrest the culprits. While 12 people were apprehended till Sunday, three more suspects were detained on the intervening night of Sunday and Monday. The total number of those taken into custody for questioning in the case stands at 15, a police officer said.

He said the SIT is working on various clues to crack the case and requesting people to maintain law and order.

Responding to a call for bandh by a local group, a shutdown was observed in Reasi town and adjoining areas on Monday with groups of youth burning tyres on different roads. —*PTI*

BUDGET SESSION

MP govt denies reports of migration

BHOPAL, 1 JULY

The Madhya Pradesh government on Monday denied reports of migration from the state, attributing the difficulty in finding labourers to an increase in people's income.

This claim was made in a written reply in the state Assembly on the first day of the Budget session, in response to a question by BJP MLA Rajesh Kumar Shukla. Shukla had asked if the government was aware that, due to migration and other reasons, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find farm labourers in the Bundelkhand region.

The government attributes the difficulty in finding labourers to an increase in people's income PHOTO: PTI

The MLA sought information about government schemes to provide farm equipment, noting that the input costs and production of farmers would increase if various agricultural tasks such as weeding, hoeing, irrigation, and harvesting were done with both human labourers and mechanical equipment.

In the written reply, Minister for Farmers Welfare Aidal Singh Kansana stated, "There is no evidence of migration in the Bundelkhand region. However, the problem of getting labourers is gradually increasing throughout the state due to the increased income of the people. The department is promoting agricultural mechanisation to address this situation."

The minister added that the continuous promotion of agricultural equipment distribution by the department is strengthening machine production in the state and increasing the number of manufacturers. —*PTI*

India to be a part of SERA, Blue Origin's space project

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Space Exploration and Research Agency and Blue Origin on Monday announced India as a partner nation in their human spaceflight programme for citizens from countries who have sent a few or no astronauts to space.

SERA, a US-based agency, will offer citizens from across the world six seats on a future mission of New Shepard, Blue Origin's reusable suborbital rocket. New Shepard will fly the selected astronauts on an 11-minute journey past the Kármán line (100 km), the internationally recognised boundary of space.

Astronauts will experience several minutes of weightlessness before making a controlled descent back to the landing pad. "We're excited to have India as part of our human spaceflight programme," said Joshua Skurla, Co-Founder, SERA.

PHOTO: X @DDNEWSLIVE

Any Indian citizen can register for the programme by paying a fee of approximately USD 2.50 to cover the costs of verification checks that ensure safe and fair voting. —*PTI*

ALL DECKED UP

Preparations for the annual Rath Yatra festival are underway, in Puri
PHOTO: ANI

Americans are ditching China to 'make in India'

Melissa & Doug had a situation. For decades, the American toy brand had leaned heavily on factories in China to make its products — wooden puzzles, stuffed animals, play mats. Suddenly, that course looked risky.

It was February 2021, and the world was besieged by a pandemic. Lockdowns disrupted Chinese factories. Trade hostilities between Washington and Beijing were undermining the benefits of depending on plants in China. Former president Donald J Trump had slapped tariffs on a broad variety of Chinese imports, increasing their prices, and President Biden extended that policy.

Melissa & Doug was eager to shift some production to other countries. Which explained the arrival of its chief supply chain officer at a factory in Greater Noida.

The factory was owned by a family business called Sunlord. The Melissa & Doug executive was surprised to see that the plant could make high-quality wooden toys, at prices comparable to those in China. Late last year, Sunlord completed its first batch of products for Melissa & Doug, a modest order of about 10,000 items, and now is cranking out 25,000 per month.

"What they want is 20 to 30 per cent of their production being done in India," said Sunlord's director, Amitabh Kharbanda. "India has a lot of positive vibes right now."

In a global marketplace reshaped by volatile forces — not least the animosity between the United States and China — India shows signs of emerging as a potentially significant place to manufacture products. Multinational brands that have for decades relied on Chinese factories are expanding to India as they seek to limit the vulnerabilities of concentrating production in any single country.

The shift to India could make the global supply chain more resilient, reducing its susceptibility to shocks. It could also boost fortunes in India, which

Sunlord, a manufacturer in India, has helped the American toy company Melissa & Doug diversify beyond China ***PHOTO: THE NEW YORK TIMES***

missed out on the manufacturing boom that lifted hundreds of millions of people from poverty in East Asia — first in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, then in China and, more recently, in Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam. Though roughly one billion people are of working age in India, the country has only 430 million jobs, according to the Center for Monitoring Indian Economy, an independent research institution in Mumbai. And most of those who are counted as employed endure a precarious existence as day laborers and farmhands. Growing exports could be a source of new jobs — especially for women, who have been largely shut out of the formal working ranks.

India's manufacturing growth remains nascent and tenuous. In its nearly 80 years as an independent nation, the country has typically been ruled by stultifying bureaucracy, ardor for self-sufficiency and disdain for international trade.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has altered that perception, winning plaudits from business leaders for streamlining regulations and championing industry. But this has produced more speeches than paychecks: Manufacturing makes up only 13 per cent of India's economy, a lower share than a decade ago, when Modi took office. His authoritarian bent and demonization of India's Muslim minority stoke doubts about his leadership, risking social strife that could undermine the country's appeal.

And Modi's disappointing performance in recent national elections yielded greater uncertainty. After losing its Parliament majority, his Hindu nationalist party was forced to forge a coalition to maintain power — a wild card for future governance.

Over the past 10 years, even as India has aggressively built out ports and highways, its basic infrastructure has remained patchy, challenging the movement of raw materials and finished goods. Even those involved in Indian manufacturing wonder about the country's ability to handle a surge of growth.

American brands "see the strength which India brings to the table," said Kailesh Shah, managing director of All Time Plastics, which operates a kitchenware factory north of Mumbai. But American companies rely so heavily on Chinese industry that even a modest shift could have big consequences.

"Even taking out 5 per cent of those programs will flood the factories in India," Mr. Shah said.

China remains China — a formidable country boasting the know-how and infrastructure to make virtually everything cheaply in mass quantities.

India has the size

Not for the first time, the world echoes with pronouncements that India is finally on the verge of seizing its destiny as a major manufacturing power. Such rhetoric previously failed to translate into reality. But this time, India's mission is helped by geopolitical realities. Last year, in a survey of American companies with operations in China by the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai, 40 percent said they were shifting planned investments to other countries, or intending to do so, because of tensions between Washington and Beijing.

Most of the companies were looking to Southeast Asia. Mexico is especially well positioned to capture additional orders, given its proximity to and trade pact with the United States. But those countries are puny compared with China, limiting how much additional business they can absorb. They also remain significantly dependent on Chinese industry for key components and raw materials.

India presents a unique proposition as a country of 1.4 billion people, making it even larger than China. With abundant raw materials, from cotton to iron ore to chemicals, it holds the potential to develop its own supply chain. If any country might someday replicate China's role in the manufacturing realm, India may possess the best shot.

These attributes explain why Walmart, the world's largest retailer, is aggressively expanding its pursuit of suppliers in India, with the goal of increasing its purchases to $10 billion a year by 2027, from about $3 billion in 2020. Apple is entrusting Indian factories with growing slices of the enterprise for making iPhones. *—Courtesy, The New York Times*

SALAR سالار

Is social media pushing misogynist content on boys?

Many parents are worried about their children using social media. But these concerns tend to focus on privacy, exposure to explicit material or contact with strangers.

As researchers looking at sexism and misogyny in Australian schools and the influence of social media, we think it is also important for parents to understand how algorithms work.

These can drive misogynistic content towards boys and young men and make extreme views seem normal.

What does research say about social media?

Researchers are increasingly studying how social media can amplify social and political divisions. It is also showing how these platforms spread prejudice, hate speech and misinformation.

At the same time, researchers are identifying a growing divide between young men and women in their attitudes towards gender equality.

Our own research has found a disturbing increase in sexism, sexual harassment and misogyny in Australian schools. This includes examples of boys physically intimidating women teachers in schools, gaslighting them, saying they are "hysterical", describing gender inequality issues as "myths", and saying things like "Miss, your boobs look really big today".

Similar examples emerged from other Australian research this year.

Our research, done via interviews with Australian teachers, suggests these views are influenced by the rise of figures from the "manosphere" (a collection of extreme men's communities that are anti-women) on social media.

How do algorithms work?

How are boys and young men coming into contact with this content? Algorithms play a huge role in what we all see online.

Algorithms are set up by human coders, but once operational they are automated pathways that direct content to social media users. They are optimised to get us to click, like, share and view content and keep coming back. This is the key commercial goal of the so-called "attention economy". The longer algorithms hold our attention, the more profit they generate for social media companies like Meta.

So, as a social media user demonstrates increasing interest in specific content or activities, they receive more of it.

Boys are 'fed' misogyny online

Recent studies have shown us how boys and young men are being fed misogynistic content.

A 2022 Australian study set up ten experimental YouTube accounts. These included profiles of four boys under 18, four young men over 18 and two blank control accounts.

It showed boys and young men were lured to the manosphere through "recommended video" features that pop up. On YouTube shorts (which feature shorter videos) this phenomenon was worse. The study found the algorithm was seen to: optimise more aggressively in response to user behaviour and show more extreme videos within a relatively brief time frame. A 2024 Irish study made similar findings.

Researchers created ten fake profiles for TikTok and YouTube shorts on ten blank smartphones. On the two different platforms, the researchers created accounts for a 16- and 18-year-old boy who sought content typically associated with masculine gender norms for their age (such as the gym, sport and video games), a 16- and 18-year-old boy who sought manosphere content, and one blank control account.

Misogynist manosphere content was sent to users regardless of whether those accounts actively searched for it. This was especially the case for the profiles set up as teenage boys seeking out content typically associated with masculine gender norms. All accounts were presented with masculinist, extremist and anti-feminist content and the frequency increased once their account demonstrated interest or engagement.

How does misogynist content radicalise boys?

We believe what is occurring is very serious. In our research we use the term "misogynist radicalisation" to describe what is happening to some boys and young men.

This phrase was selected to capture a stark and sudden shift in boys' attitudes and behaviour towards women and girls in Australian schools, which teachers report occurred at the return from lockdown and remote schooling.

Although "radicalisation" is typically used to refer to the process of being recruited to religious or political terrorist ideology, research has identified misogyny as a feature of right-wing terrorism.

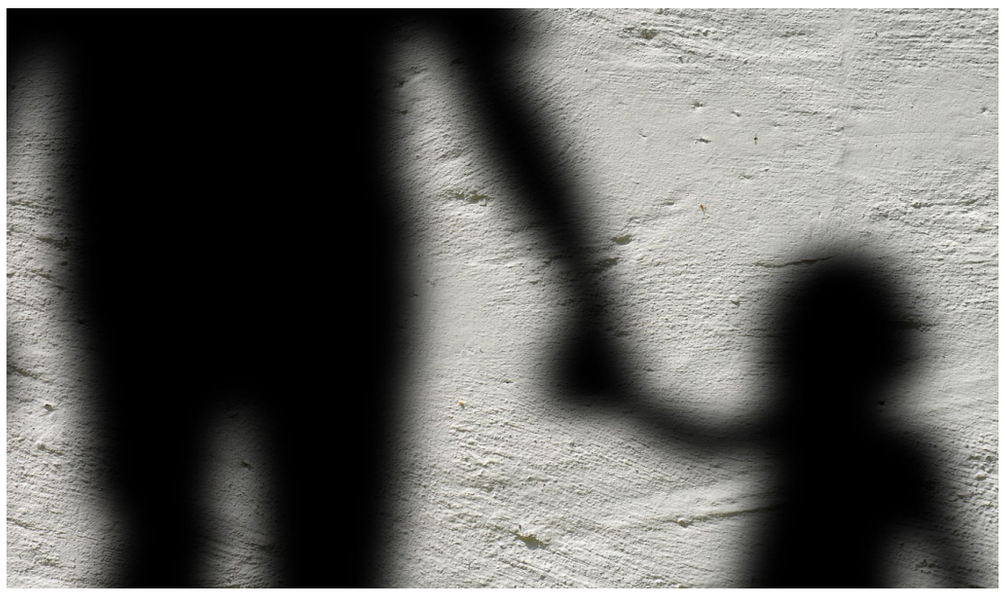
At the same time, the "incel" (or involuntary celibate) community is also being seen as a possible terrorist threat. Incels, who are mostly men and boys, blame and resent women for their own inability to find a sexual partner. We also know misogyny perpetuates gender inequity and biases that underpin violence against women.

While we are not suggesting boys and young people who are influenced by extremist misogynist ideology will all become violent or recruited to other extremist groups, it is important to consider misogyny as both a form of extremism and as an ideology. *—Courtesy, The Conversation*

Social media algorithims can drive misogynistic content towards boys and young men and make extreme views seem normal ***PHOTO: PIXABAY***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Childhood trauma damages society – why aren't leaders recognising it?



People with childhood trauma are vulnerable to outbursts of anger, panic, depression, difficulties with food intake, drugs and sleep ***PHOTO: AL JAZEERA***

Twenty-five years ago a study by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revealed that, in the United States, traumatic life experiences during childhood and adolescence are far more common than was expected. The participants in that study were mostly white, middle-class, well-educated, and in possession of good medical insurance, and yet, only one-third of them reported no serious adverse childhood experiences. In the remaining sample, the vast majority had experienced two or more horrendous childhood events. Subsequent scientific reports from 96 countries have shown that, globally, over half of all children – one billion girls and boys – are exposed to violence each year.

Why is that important? People with childhood histories of trauma are vulnerable to develop a host of problems, including difficulties concentrating, outbursts of anger, panic, depression, and difficulties with food intake, drugs and sleep, as well as higher levels of stress hormones, and reduced or impaired immune responses. Neuroscience research consistently shows that childhood trauma alters brain systems dedicated to evaluating the relative risk of what is happening around us, and causes difficulties regulating emotional responses throughout life.

Despite the World Health Organization's (WHO) leadership in anchoring violence against children as a global public health priority and the numerous studies over the past 30 years spelling out the devastating effects of childhood trauma on mental and physical health, the effects of exposure to violence remain largely unrecognised, and unresourced, in school systems, childcare agencies, medical clinics and the criminal justice system.

A chance to redress that neglect is on the horizon. In November 2024, the government of Colombia – in partnership with the government of Sweden, the WHO, UNICEF and the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on ending violence against children – will host a Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children. A first-ever bringing together of all 194 countries to recognise the scale, and severity of impact, of childhood violence and to begin to marshal much-needed resources to accelerate action.

The fact that this is a first-ever Global Ministerial on the issue, and that it is largely considered a third-tier policy priority, is startling. A response commensurate with the challenge that preventing childhood violence presents is long overdue.

Long-overdue and short-sighted; the CDC study concluded that childhood violence is the most costly public health issue in the US, calculating that the overall costs exceeded those of cancer or heart disease. It estimated that eradicating childhood violence in the US would reduce the overall rate of depression by more than half, alcoholism by two-thirds, and suicide, serious drug abuse, and domestic violence by three-quarters.

Moreover, preventing exposure to violence and abuse would significantly affect job performance, and vastly decrease the need for incarceration. In fact, about 95 percent of violent inmates suffer from childhood experiences with violence and abuse. That, of course, is not limited to the US, but is relevant to children around the world.

When people talk about children's exposure to violence they tend to focus on what happens outside the home: on the streets, at school, in refugee camps, and in war-torn societies. However, for the majority of children, trauma begins at home, at the hands of their own family members. Both physical and sexual violence by one's own caregivers have devastating consequences.

In 1987, Frank Putnam and Penelope Trickett at the National Institute of Mental Health started the first longitudinal study of the impact of sexual abuse on girls' development that now has been ongoing for 35 years. Compared with girls of the same age, race and social conditions, sexually abused girls suffer from a range of profoundly negative effects: difficulties learning, depression, troubled sexual development, high rates of obesity and self-mutilation. They dropped out of school at much higher rates and had more serious medical illnesses. This study, and numerous others like it, underscore the reality that supporting high-quality early caregiving is critically important in preventing physical, social and mental health problems, regardless of traumas that occur outside the family.

Safe and protective early relationships are vital to protect children from long-term problems. If the parents themselves are the source of distress, the child has no one to turn to for comfort and for restoring disrupted biological functioning. Social support is a biological necessity – not an option, and this notion should be the backbone of all prevention and treatment. Early stimulation and sensitive parenting are fundamental to successful growth and development.

John Heckman, winner of the 2000 Nobel Prize in Economics, has shown that quality early childhood programmes that involve parents and promote basic skills in disadvantaged children more than pay for themselves in improved outcomes. Economists have calculated that every dollar invested in high-quality home visiting, daycare, and preschool programmes results in $7 in savings on welfare payments, healthcare costs, substance abuse treatment, and incarceration, plus higher tax revenues due to better-paying jobs.

Following violence, the world is experienced with a different nervous system. The three-decade-long research by Martin Teicher and his colleagues at Harvard has shown that many of the brain abnormalities that were thought to be specific to a variety of psychiatric problems were, in fact, the direct consequence of childhood trauma and abuse. Labels such as "depression", "oppositional defiant disorder", "intermittent explosive disorder" and bipolar disorder, do not begin to address underlying issues. A mislabelled person is likely to become a mistreated patient. Mental illness is not really like cancer or heart disease: everything about us – our brains, our minds, and our bodies – is geared towards being integrated members of social groups, able to share, nurture and collaborate. *—Courtesy, Al Jazeera*

PHOTO: X/@SHEHANSEMA

Lankan politician R Sampanthan dies at 91

COLOMBO, 1 JULY

R Sampanthan, a veteran Sri Lankan politician and a moderate Tamil leader, who relentlessly pursued a life of peace, justice and dignity for Tamil nationals in the island nation, passed away on Sunday night. He was ailing for a long time and had missed the current parliamentary sessions for a long time. Sampanthan, 91, passed away while receiving treatment in a hospital, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) announced. Sampanthan led the TNA from 2004 and became only the second Tamil to become the main Opposition leader in the Sinhala-majority country. "My deepest condolences to the family and friends of veteran TNA leader R. Sampanthan," Prime Minister Narendra Modi posted on X. *—PTI*

Pakistan hikes petrol, diesel prices after Eid

ISLAMABAD, 1 JULY

Weeks after slashing the prices of fuel ahead of the Eid ul Adha festival, the cash-strapped Pakistan government on Monday sharply hiked their prices for the next fortnight as it began the new fiscal year. According to a notification, the prices of petrol and High-Speed Diesel (HSD) were raised by Rs 7.45 and Rs 9.56 per litre respectively on the first day of a tax-laden budget for 2024-25, The Express Tribune newspaper reported. Last month, the government slashed the prices of petrol and HSD by Pakistani Rs 10.20 and Pakistani Rs 2.33 per litre respectively, ahead of Eid ul Adha. The Ministry of Finance said the prices of petroleum products have seen an increasing trend in the international market during the last fortnight. *—PTI*

2 Algerian scribes held for publishing protest video

ALGIERS, 1 JULY

Algerian authorities arrested two journalists for publishing a video showing businesswomen protesting how they were treated at a government-sponsored event. Journalists in Algeria have faced mounting repression since President Abdelmadjid Tebboune came to power four years ago, with possible long jail time on flimsy charges, experts say. News outlets have also shuttered due to mounting legal fees. Sofiane Ghirous and Ferhat Omar of the news website "Algerie Scoop" were detained last week for broadcasting material authorities claimed "constituted incitement and hate speech," according to the National Committee for the Liberation of Detainees. *—AP*

Pak traders protest after people go missing

BALOCHISTAN, 1 JULY

For several days, families whose relatives are reportedly missing from different areas of Balochistan's Kech district have been staging a sit-in to demand their safe return. According to reports, traders and residents in the area have now voluntarily shuttered their shops and businesses, choosing to forgo their daily earnings as a show of support for the grieving families. Taking to social media platform X, the Baloch Yakjehti Committee, an organisation advocating for the rights of Baloch people, stated "On the 15th day of the sit-in protest, Kech has come to a standstill with a complete shutter-down protest. In a display of solidarity, traders and residents of Kech have voluntarily closed their businesses to stand with the elderly, men, women, and children 1/2 participating in the protest. *—ANI*

Markets up in France as Far-Right takes lead in polls

National Rally leads in the first round of elections

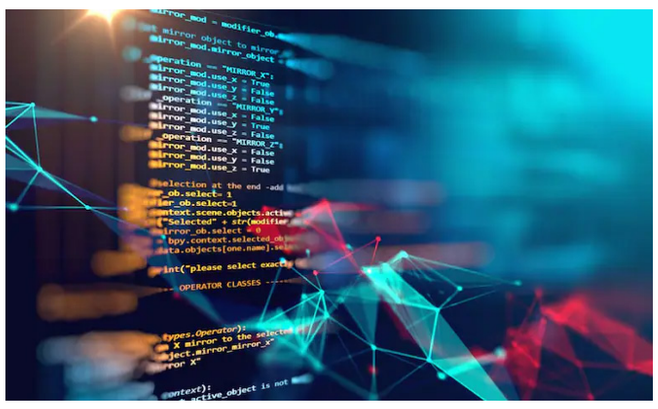
PARIS, 1 JULY

French shares advanced early on Monday in Europe, with the benchmark in Paris up 2.8 per cent after the Far-Right National Rally gained a strong lead in first-round legislative elections.

France's National Rally surged into the lead in the first round of legislative elections, according to results released early Monday, bringing the far-right party to the brink of power and dealing a major blow to President Emmanuel Macron's centrists in an election that could set the country, and Europe, on a starkly different course.

Other European markets opened higher, while most Asian markets also gained.

The euro rose, climbing to USD 1.0770 from USD 1.0744 as polling agencies suggested the National Rally might win a majority in the lower house of parliament. However the outcome remains uncertain and the voting system is complex.



Other European markets opened higher, while most Asian markets also gained *PHOTO: PTI*

The CAC 40 in Paris jumped 2.8 per cent to 7,688.20, while Germany's DAX climbed 0.9 per cent to 18,394.56. In London, the FTSE 100 rose 0.6 per cent to 8,209.97.

The gains for the euro were likely due to relief over the far right parties not gaining more votes than expected, economists at ING Economics said in a commentary.

"Still, first round results are not offering much certainty about the composition of the parliament, and the second round scheduled for the next weekend is in fact the big risk event," it said.

In Asian trading, Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 added 0.1 per cent to 39,631.06 after a quarterly survey by the Bank of Japan, called the "tankan", showed a modest improvement in confidence among the country's largest manufacturers April-June.

However, the government downgraded its estimate for growth in the first quarter of the year, to a minus 2.9 per cent annual rate from the earlier figure of minus 1.8 per cent.

The dollar surged further against the Japanese yen and was trading early Monday at 161.04 yen, up from 160.80 yen late Friday.

The Shanghai Composite climbed 0.9 per cent to 2,994.73 after a survey of factory purchasing managers, reported over the weekend, showed conditions remained in contraction for a second straight month. *—PTI*

Indians to suffer as Australia hikes int'l student visa fees

CANBERRA, 1 JULY

The Albanese government has more than doubled the international student visa application fee from USD 710 to USD 1,600 in the latest measure to reduce arrivals to Australia.

The fee hike is expected to impact Indian students significantly, constituting the second-largest group of international students in Australia.

In 2022, a substantial number of Indian students, totaling 100,009, were enrolled in Australian institutions, according to government data. From January to September 2023 alone, 122,000 Indian students were studying in Australia.

The government announced the move on Monday, confirming pre-budget speculation in the tertiary education sector that fee hikes will be used in addition to the international student cap as a means to reduce net migration.

However, Labor is preparing to water down the measure for Pacific neighbours and Timor-Leste, with a government spokesperson revealing "special arrangements will be put in place recognising Australia's close relationship" with these countries.

The increase has been attacked by Abul Rizvi, the former deputy secretary of the immigration department, and the International Education Association of Australia, which warned that the sector was undergoing a "death by a thousand cuts".

May's budget projects that this number will fall to 260,000 in 2024-25, as the government applies a series of measures to reduce arrivals, including caps on international student numbers.

Rizvi and the Chief Executive of the International Education Association, Phil Honeywood, both predicted a decrease in applications from prospective students, with Australia's fees out of kilter with international competitors.

"It's really poor, short-term thinking," Rizvi said. "We're actually shooting ourselves in the foot: the people it will deter will tend to be good students with options."

—Courtesy, The Guardian

At least 1,22,000 Indian students were studying in Australia in between January to September 2023 *PHOTO: CANVA*

US assures support to Hindus against discrimination

WASHINGTON, 1 JULY

Prominent American lawmakers have pledged their support to Indian Americans to fight against increasing Hinduphobia and discrimination against the minority Hindu community in the US.

Organised by the Coalition of Hindus of North America (CoHNA), the 3rd National Hindu Advocacy Day attracted several Hindu students, researchers, and community leaders on 28 June to discuss the concerns faced by the Hindus living in the US.

"We are here, and we are fighting," Congressman Thanedar said in his address at the day-long advocacy here.

"The voice you all have, the voice the Hindu community has in Congress," said Thanedar, a Democrat, who has introduced House Resolution 1131 (H.Res 1131), which condemns Hinduphobia and attacks on temples, while celebrating the contribution of the Hindu American community. Congressman Rich McCormick welcomed the continued and growing engagement of the Hindu American and Indian American community. *—PTI*

China and Philippines have stepped up efforts to assert its claims over disputed South China Sea *PHOTO: WEIBO*

Amid tensions, China deploys jet near Philippines

BEIJING, 1 JULY

China has deployed its second aircraft carrier 'Shandong' which was spotted patrolling waters off the Philippine coast as Manila stepped up efforts to assert its claims over a shoal in the disputed South China Sea firmly opposing Beijing's counterclaims.

Shandong, an aircraft carrier with a displacement of about 70,000 tonnes, was seen patrolling the waters of the Philippines which serve as a deterrence against "continuous Philippine provocations" on Chinese islands and reefs in the South China Sea, state-run Global Times media reported on Monday. The aircraft carrier is likely on a scheduled exercise that could also prepare it for a potential far sea voyage into the West Pacific, it quoted Chinese experts as saying.

Shandong's deployment comes after the People's Liberation Army (PLA) deployed major surface combat ships, including large and medium destroyers as well as the main amphibious landing ship in the South China Sea as the maritime territorial conflict with Manila escalated.

Ni Lexiong, a defence professor in the Department of Political Science at Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, was quoted by the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post as saying that the Shandong's passage was meant to be a deterrent to Manila and Washington and underline "China's determination to protect territorial sea sovereignty" amid tensions over the Second Thomas Shoal. The China-Philippines confrontation to assert their claims in the disputed South China Sea took a violent turn last month as their naval ships collided in the first such incident after Beijing issued new rules to act against foreign vessels and detain foreigners "suspected of violating" regulations in the Chinese waters. *—PTI*

N Korea tests missiles post US, S Korea meet

According to South Korea militarty, the first missile flew 600km and the second 120km *PHOTO: X/@JEANNIE55577534*

SEOUL, 1 JULY

The North Korea test-fired two ballistic missile Monday, South Korea's military said, a day after the North vowed "offensive and overwhelming" responses to a new US military drill with South Korea and Japan.

It said the first missile flew 600km and the second missile 120km but didn't say where they landed. North Korea typically test-fires missile toward its eastern waters, but the second missile's flight distance was too short to reach those waters.

South Korean media said an unidentified South Korean military source reported that it was highly likely the second missile crashed in an inland area of the North.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, which did not comment on the media reports, said South Korea maintains a firm readiness to repel any provocations by North Korea.

- The launch came two days after South Korea, the US and Japan ended their new drills in the region. Monday's launch was the North's first weapons firing in five days

The launch came two days after South Korea, the US and Japan ended their new multi-domain trilateral drills in the region. Monday's launch was the North's first weapons firing in five days.

On Wednesday, North Korea launched what it called a multiwarhead missile in the first known launch of a developmental, advanced weapon meant to defeat US and South Korean missile defences. North Korea said the launch was successful, but South Korea dismissed the North's claim as deception to cover up a failed launch. *—AP*

Japan launches Earth observation satellite

TOKYO, 1 JULY

Japan deployed an upgraded Earth observation satellite for disaster response and security after it was launched on a new flagship H3 rocket on Monday.

The H3 No. 3 rocket lifted off from the Tanegashima Space Centre on a southwestern Japanese island and released its payload about 16 minutes later as planned, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, or JAXA, said during a livestream.

The Advanced Land Observation Satellite, or ALOS-4, is tasked primarily with Earth observation and data collection for disaster response and mapmaking.

It is also capable of monitoring military activity, such as missile launches, with an infrared sensor developed by the Defence Ministry.

The rocket appeared to fly as planned, and JAXA is expected to give further details at a news conference later Monday. The launch was initially planned for Sunday but was delayed due to bad weather at the launch site.

The ALOS-4 is a successor to the current ALOS-2 and can observe a much wider area. Japan will operate both for the time being.

The launch was the third of the H3 system, after the successful one on February 17. and the shocking failed debut flight a year earlier when the rocket had to be destroyed with its payload — a satellite that was supposed to be the ALOS-3. *—AP*

China's rocket crashes after 'accidental launch'

BEIJING, 1 JULY

A powerful Chinese rocket crashed after an "accidental launch" during a ground test on Sunday due to a structural failure, a private company responsible for the rocket said.

Space Pioneer, also known as Beijing Tianbing Technology, said in a statement that the Tianlong-3 rocket was unexpectedly launched during a static-fire test at a facility in Gongyi county in Henan province.

Luckily it landed in a hilly area of the city of Gongyi and the company said there were no injuries as people in the area were evacuated in advance of the rocket test.

The nine engines of the rocket, stated to be the most powerful in the country, fired in the afternoon on Sunday were lifted off because of a "structural failure at the connection between the rocket body and the test platform", the company said.

Space Pioneer is one of several private aerospace companies that are developing medium-lift, reusable rockets to help China assemble its satellite constellations comparable to SpaceX's Starlink.

Residents in flats in the county-level city of Gongyi posted footage online showing the rocket climbing into the sky, leaving a trail of thick smoke before falling back to the ground on its side, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported Sunday. The crash of the kerosene-liquid oxygen-propelled rocket caused a huge explosion.

Some space observers criticised Space Pioneer for "making a low-level mistake".

—AP

REPRESENTING BRITISH MONARCH

After 123 yrs, Australia gets woman Guv-General

MELBOURNE, 1 JULY

Australia appointed Sam Mostyn on Monday as only its second woman governor-general, a largely ceremonial role representing the British monarch who is the nation's head of state after 123 years. It is the first such Australian appointment since the reign of King Charles III began in 2022 and the first by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's centre-left Labor Party government that wants to replace the British monarch. Mostyn replaces Gen. David Hurley, a former Australian Defense Force chief. *—PTI*

Sam Mostyn *PHOTO: X/@ALBOMP*

- It is the first such Australian appointment since the reign of King Charles III began in 2022

EXPANDING INFLUENCE

Africa is ISIS' new battleground

PERTH, 1 JULY

A decade after declaring its caliphate in Iraq and Syria, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has lost its territory but continues to exert influence and poses a growing threat in Africa.

When Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi declared himself the caliph of Muslims in 2014, he had transitioned from a hunted guerrilla to claim he was the Commander of all Muslims.

The rise of ISIS in Iraq and Syria marked a significant shift in global terrorism. However, the group came under intense global resistance culminating in the death of Al Baghdadi in October 2019. The group has since shifted its strategy, focusing on ideological propagation and decentralised operations, which have found fertile ground in Africa.

The rise of ISIS in Iraq and Syria marked a significant shift in global terrorism *PHOTO: BBC NEWS*

From Osama bin Laden to Ayman Zawahiri and al Baghdadi, militant ideologues have identified African spaces as crucial to their strategy.

Two years into the new caliphate, al-Baghdadi declared that the group had "expanded and shifted some of our command, media, and wealth to Africa."

Following ISIS's territorial defeat in the Levant, Africa was projected to host the next ISIS capital. By September 2021, the Islamic State had established operations in six African countries and regions: Libya (2014), Algeria (2014), Sinai (2014), West Africa (2015), Somalia (2018) and Central Africa (2019).

The West Africa Province has two "wings" in the Lake Chad Basin (ISWAP-Lake Chad) and the Sahel (ISWAP-Greater Sahara). Likewise, the Central Africa Province has "wings" in Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo, giving the Islamic State a presence in at least eight locations across Africa.

Africa has provided ISIS with continuity and relevance and is responsible for ISIS and its affiliates remaining the deadliest terrorist group globally for the ninth consecutive year. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Gold flat at ₹72,350, silver rises by ₹200

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Gold prices traded flat at Rs 72,350 per 10 grams while silver gained Rs 200 per kg in the local market on Monday, according to HDFC Securities.

Silver prices rose by Rs 200 to Rs 90,300 per kg from the previous close of Rs 90,100 per kg.

In the overseas markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,327 per ounce, slightly up USD 1 from the previous close.

Gold struggled to find direction on Monday and moved in a narrow range above the USD 2,320 level during the European trading session, Gandhi said.

Silver also marginally up at USD 29.15 per ounce. In the previous session, it had settled at USD 29.13 per ounce.

"Momentum in bullion looks consolidative ahead of the US Fed chair Jerome Powell's speech. *—PTI*

Rupee falls 11 paise to 83.45 against US dollar

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The rupee depreciated 11 paise to settle at 83.45 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking rising crude oil prices in international markets.

However, a firm trend in domestic equity markets, positive manufacturing PMI data and a weak US dollar against major currencies overseas capped the sharp fall, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.39 and moved between the high of 83.38 and the low of 83.47 against the greenback during the session.

The unit finally settled at 83.45 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a loss of 11 paise from its previous closing level.

On Friday, the rupee settled 11 paise higher at 83.34 against the US dollar. *—PTI*

Niva Bupa Health files papers for ₹3,000 cr IPO

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Niva Bupa Health Insurance Company Ltd, formerly Max Bupa Health Insurance Company, has filed preliminary papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 3,000 crore through an initial public offering. The proposed Initial Public Offering (IPO) is a combination of fresh issuance of equity shares worth Rs 800 crore and an offer for sale of up to Rs 2,200 crore by a promoter and an investor shareholder, according to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP).

Under the OFS, investor Fettle Tone LLP will sell shares to the tune of Rs 1,880 crore and promoter Bupa Singapore Holdings Pte Ltd will offload shares valued Rs 320 crore. *—PTI*

Govt to organise 'Global AI Summit' from 3-4 July

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology will organise a global AI summit on 3-4 July to discuss issues related to artificial intelligence with India firmly committed to ethical and inclusive growth of this new-age technology.

Through the 'Global IndiaAI Summit 2024', India aspires to establish itself as a global leader in AI innovation, ensuring that AI benefits are accessible to all and contribute to the nation's socio-economic development. The two-day event being organised by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity) in the national capital highlights the government's "unwavering commitment to the responsible development, deployment, and adoption of artificial intelligence", the release said. The summit will provide a platform for leading AI experts to share insights on AI issues *—PTI*

4 ASEAN nations to get Indian payment app

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

India has joined Project Nexus, a multilateral international initiative that aims to enable instant cross-border retail payments through interlinking payment systems of various countries.

Nexus was conceptualised by the Innovation Hub of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) to connect the payment systems of four ASEAN countries (Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand) and India, who would be the founding members and first mover countries of this platform.

As per a statement from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), an agreement was signed by the BIS and the central banks of the founding countries -- Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM), Bank of Thailand (BOT), Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS), and the RBI on Sunday (30 June, 2024), in Basel, Switzerland.

Indonesia, which has been involved from the early stages, continues to be involved as a special observer.

The RBI statement said that the platform may be extended to more countries, going forward.

The platform is expected to go live by 2026. Once functional, Nexus will play a key role in making retail cross-border payments efficient, faster, and more cost-effective.

RBI has been collaborating bilaterally with various countries to link India's digital public infrastructure -- Unified Payments Interface (UPI) -- with their respective counterparts for cross-border payments.

While India and its partner countries can continue to benefit through such bilateral connectivity of fast payment systems, a multilateral approach, such as this Nexus, will provide a further push to such efforts in expanding the international reach of Indian payment systems.

Payments through digital means in India are hitting fresh highs, as its citizens are increasingly adopting the emerging modes of transacting on the internet.

The UPI payment system has become hugely popular for retail digital payments in India, and its adoption is increasing at a rapid pace.

UPI is India's mobile-based fast payment system, which facilitates customers to make round-the-clock payments instantly, using a Virtual Payment Address (VPA) created by the customer. *—ANI*

US wants Boeing to plead guilty for fraud

346 people died in the 2018 and 2019 crashes

UNITED STATES, 1 JULY

The US Justice Department is pushing Boeing to plead guilty to criminal fraud in connection with two deadly plane crashes involving its 737 Max jetliners, according to several people who heard federal prosecutors detail a proposed offer on Sunday.

Boeing will have until the end of the coming week to accept or reject the offer, which includes the giant aerospace company agreeing to an independent monitor who would oversee its compliance with anti-fraud laws, they said.

The case stems from the department's determination that Boeing violated an agreement that was intended to resolve a 2021 charge of conspiracy to defraud the US government. Prosecutors alleged at the time that Boeing misled regulators who approved the 737 Max and set pilot-training requirements to fly the plane. The company blamed two relatively low-level employees for the fraud.

Boeing will have until end of this week to accept the deal or reject the offer PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

The Justice Department told relatives of some of the 346 people who died in the 2018 and 2019 crashes about the plea offer during a video meeting. The family members, who want Boeing to face a criminal trial and to pay a $24.8 billion fine, reacted angrily. One said prosecutors were gaslighting the families; another shouted at them for several minutes when given a chance to speak.

Boeing paid a $244 million fine as part of the 2021 settlement of the original fraud charge. The Justice Department is likely to seek another, similar penalty as part of the new plea offer, said a person familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing to discuss an ongoing case.

It is unclear what impact a plea deal might have on other investigations into Boeing, including those following the blowout of a panel called a door plug from the side of a Boeing Max 9 during an Alaska Airlines flight in January. *—AP*

GAINS IN IT & BANKING

Sensex, Nifty hit fresh record high

MUMBAI, 1 JULY

Benchmark Sensex rose by 443 points to close at a new record high while Nifty settled above the 24,100 mark on Monday on buying in banking and IT shares in line with gains in Asian and European markets

The 30-share BSE Sensex settled higher by 443.46 points or 0.56 per cent at an all-time high of 79,476.19.

During the day, the barometer soared 528.27 points or 0.66 per cent to 79,561.

The broader Nifty rose by 131.35 points or 0.55 per cent to close at a fresh lifetime high of 24,141.95.

Among Sensex shares, Tech Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Consultancy Services, JSW Steel, Infosys, HDFC Bank, Tata Motors and ICICI Bank were the biggest gainers.

NTPC, State Bank of India, Larsen & Toubro, Sun Pharma, IndusInd Bank and Axis Bank were among the laggards.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.51 per cent to USD 85.43 a barrel.

PHOTO: PTI

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 23.09 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark declined 210.45 points or 0.27 per cent to settle at 79,032.73 on Friday.

During the day, it jumped 428.4 points or 0.54 per cent to hit a fresh record trading peak of 79,671.58.

The Nifty went lower by 33.90 points or 0.14 per cent to 24,010.60.

During the day, it climbed 129.5 points or 0.53 per cent to hit a new lifetime high of 24,174. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Shanghai settled higher. *—PTI*

ATF PRICE HIKED BY 1.2%, LPG CUT BY ₹30

PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Jet fuel or ATF price on Monday was hiked by 1.2 per cent while that of commercial LPG used by hotels and restaurants cut by Rs 30 per 19-kg cylinder in line with international oil price trends.

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was hiked by Rs 1,179.37 per kilolitre, or 1.2 per cent, to Rs 96,148.38 per kl in the national capital, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

The increase followed a steep 6.5 per cent (Rs 6,673.87 per kl) reduction effected on June 1. ATF rate in Mumbai was increased to Rs 89,908.30.

Prices differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes. Alongside, oil firms cut price of commercial LPG by Rs 30 to Rs 1,646 per 19-kg cylinder.

This is the fourth straight monthly reduction in rates. The price was last cut by Rs 69 per cylinder on 1 June. Prior to that, rates were on May 1 reduced by Rs 19 per cylinder, and by Rs 30.5 on 1 April.

Rate of cooking gas used in domestic households, however, remained unchanged at Rs 803 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise prices of ATF and cooking gas on 1st of every month based on the average price of benchmark international fuel and foreign exchange rate.

Prices of petrol and diesel continue to remain frozen. Rates had been cut by Rs 2 per litre in mid-March. Petrol costs Rs 94.72 a litre in Delhi & diesel is at Rs 87.62. *—PTI*

7 YEARS OF GST

GST brings relief to every home: Fin Min

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Goods and Services Tax (GST), which completed seven years of implementation on Monday, has brought happiness and relief to every home through reduced taxes on household appliances and mobile phones, the finance ministry said on Monday.

GST, which subsumed about 17 local tax and cesses, was rolled out on 1 July, 2017. The theme of the 7th GST Day is Sashakt Vyapar Samagra Vikas (empowered trade overall growth).

"With reduced tax rates on household goods after GST implementation, #7yearsofGST has brought happiness and relief to every home through lower GST on household appliances and mobile phones," the ministry said in a post on X.

The GST taxpayer base has increased to 1.46 crore in April 2024 from 1.05 crore as of April 2018.

"We have witnessed a quantum jump in taxpayers base along with improved compliance," Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) Chairman Sanjay Kumar Agarwal said.

Giving comparative charts of pre- and post-GST tax rates of household goods, the ministry said GST has enhanced the ease of living with every household saving on expenditure on food items and items of mass consumption after GST implementation.

PHOTO: PTI

- The compliance burden was reduced for small taxpayers, and the GST Council has recommended to waive off annual return filing requirement for taxpayers with aggregate annual turnover of up to Rs 2 crore in 2023-24

It further said the compliance burden was reduced for small taxpayers, and the GST Council has recommended to waive off annual return filing requirement for taxpayers with aggregate annual turnover of up to Rs 2 crore in fiscal 2023-24. *—PTI*

The highest supply in a day also rose to 245.41 GW PHOTO: FREEPIK

India's power consumption rises nearly 9% in June

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

India's power consumption rose by nearly 9 per cent to 152.38 billion units (BU) in June compared to the year-ago period mainly due to scorching heat which forced excessive use of cooling appliances like air conditioners and desert coolers.

In June 2023, the power consumption stood at 140.27 BU, according to official data.

The highest supply in a day (peak power demand met) also rose to 245.41 GW in June 2024 against 223.29 GW in the year-ago month.

The peak power demand was recorded at 224.10 GW in June 2023.

The peak power demand touched an all-time high of 250.20GW in May this year. The previous all-time high peak power demand of 243.27 GW was recorded in September 2023.

Earlier this year, the power ministry projected a peak power demand of 235 GW during daytime and 225 GW during evening hours for May and 240 GW during daytime and 235 GW during evening hours for June 2024.

The demand for power as well as consumption will continue to be steady in coming days due to high humidity which make use air conditioners inevitable, they said.

According to the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), the conditions are favourable for further advance of Southwest Monsoon into remaining part of Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana during the next 2-3 days.

Monsoon is likely to cover the entire country in the next three days, as per the latest bulletin on Monday. *—PTI*

US' AI fintech platform TIFIN debuts in India

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

US-based AI-driven fintech platform TIFIN on Monday marked its debut in the Indian market with the launch of MyFi, a conversational AI assistant offering customised investment guidance.

MyFi deploys research-driven, fact-based investment intelligence and AI models to generate personalised investment guidance based on the users' investment portfolio.

MyFi is a personalised product designed specifically for India. It derives inspiration from its counterpart magnifi, which has successfully established itself in the US, MyFi co-founder and CEO Kiran Nambiar told PTI.

MyFi is compatible with Android and iOS operating systems.

PHOTO: UNSPLASH

Citing a report from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), Nambiar said Indian mutual funds currently have over 8.76 crore SIP accounts, and added 8.1 million new investor accounts in April-May 2024 alone, driven by Millennials, Gen Z. *—PTI*

'Reliance can add $100 bn to m-cap'

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Reliance Industries Ltd can add up to USD 100 billion to its market capitalisation in its fourth monetisation cycle this century as new cash flow streams emerge and valuation multiples catch up, Morgan Stanley said in a report. Key to this has been RIL's market share gains, complete integration, and most importantly, ability to execute above investor expectations each time the company has re-imagined its business. This monetisation follows the USD 60 billion in investments in 2021-23 , which was the shortest investment cycle since the 1990s for RIL. *—PTI*

RS 7,581 CR PENDING

97.87% of ₹2,000 notes returned to RBI

MUMBAI, 1 JULY

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday said 97.87 per cent of the Rs 2000 denomination banknotes have returned to the banking system, and only Rs 7,581 crore worth of the withdrawn notes are still with the public.

On 19 May, 2023, RBI announced the withdrawal of Rs 2,000 denomination banknotes from circulation.

The total value of Rs 2000 banknotes in circulation, which was Rs 3.56 lakh crore at the close of business on May 19, 2023, has declined to Rs 7,581 crore at the close of business on 28 June, 2024.

On May 2023, RBI announced withdrawal of Rs 2,000 PHOTO: UNSPLASH

"Thus, 97.87 per cent of the Rs 2000 banknotes in circulation as on May 19, 2023, has since been returned," the central bank said in a statement.

The facility for deposit and/or exchange of the Rs 2000 banknotes was available at all bank branches in the country till 7 October, 2023.

The facility for the exchange of the Rs 2000 banknotes has been available at the 19 issue offices of the Reserve Bank since 19 May, 2023.

From 9 October, 2023, RBI issue offices are also accepting Rs 2000 banknotes from individuals and entities for deposit into their bank accounts.

Further, members of the public are sending Rs 2000 banknotes through India Post from any post office within the country to any of the RBI issue offices for credit to their bank accounts. *—PTI*

Manufacturing sector growth ticks higher in June

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

India's manufacturing sector output increased at a sharp pace in June as new business continued to flow in amid favourable demand conditions and resulted in record upturn in employment, a monthly survey said on Monday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) increased from 57.5 in May to 58.3 in June, indicating a sharper improvement in business conditions.

June data showed that the stronger expansion in sales at manufacturers in India was largely due to buoyant underlying demand, higher export volumes and successful advertising.

As a consequence of ongoing increases in new order intakes, firms stepped up recruitment.

The rate of job creation was sharp and the strongest seen since data collection started in March 2005.

Staff expenses reportedly intensified in June, which coupled with rising material and transportation costs caused another overall increase in operating expenses, the survey said.

Manufacturers in India were able to share additional cost burdens with their clients amid conducive demand conditions.

Selling charges were raised to the greatest extent in over two years. *—PTI*

EURO 2024

Jude takes a bad game, makes it better

Kane seals the game in the added minute

GELSENKIRCHEN, 1 JULY

As one of the most exciting soccer players in the world, Jude Bellingham's wonder goal against Slovakia was what many have come to expect from the England star.

His decision to mark the occasion by referring to a speech by former US president Theodore Roosevelt, however, seemed a less likely move from someone who only celebrated his 21st birthday on Saturday.

Bellingham's overhead kick in the fifth minute of stoppage time on Sunday night rescued England after it had trailed Slovakia 1-0 in the round of 16 at the European Championship. It sent the game into extra time and Harry Kane sealed a 2-1 win, meaning England will play Switzerland in the quarterfinals on Saturday.

Bellingham later posted part of a speech by Roosevelt on his Instagram channel, likely in response to the fierce criticism the England team has received at Euro 2024. The excerpt of the speech, commonly known as The Man in the Arena' begins with the statement "It is not the critic who counts" and goes on to say "The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena."

Jude Bellingham scores his first goal with an overhead kick against Slovakia on Monday **PHOTO: X@FABRIZIOROMANO**

England's players have been booed by fans during the Euros because of the team's unconvincing performances in Germany. Former national team captain and now BBC presenter Gary Lineker used an expletive on his podcast when delivering stinging criticism of the performances.

Playing for "England is an enjoyable feeling, but it's also a lot of pressure here," Bellingham said. "People talk a lot of rubbish and you know it's nice, when you deliver, you can give them a little bit back. —*AP*

Battling rain: Spain storm into QFs

Spain will meet Germany on Friday

COLOGNE, 1 JULY

Spain recovered from conceding an early own-goal to beat Georgia 4-1 for a spot in the Euro 2024 quarterfinals, ending one of the tournament's most compelling underdog stories.

Goals from midfielders Rodri and Fabián Ruiz brought Spain back into the game after Robin Le Normand's own-goal in the 18th minute had given Georgia a shock lead. Nico Williams and Dani OImo took the game out of Georgia's reach with two more goals late in the game as heavy rain fell.

Spain will play host nation Germany in the quarterfinals on Friday in Stuttgart. The loss ends Georgia's first ever major tournament campaign, which included a 2-0 upset win over Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal.

Despite the lopsided score, Georgia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili had another standout game with nine saves to prevent a rout.

Spain had beaten Georgia 7-1 in qualifying last year, but this game was a close contest until the last 20 minutes and testament to Georgia's rapid improvement under coach Willy Sagnol. Playing its fourth game of Euro 2024, Spain had yet to concede a goal all tournament. That soon changed when Otar Kakabadze surged down the right flank for Georgia and crossed low. Le Normand chested the ball past his own goalkeeper, with the defender apparently distracted by Khvicha Kvaratskhelia arriving behind him to meet the cross. Spain took its time to get back into the game, but Rodri -- back from a one-game suspension -- leveled the score in the 39th with a low shot from just outside the box. —*AP*

Nico Williams celebrates scoring Spain's third goal with Lamine Yamal **PHOTO: X@EURO2024**

COPA

Ecuador enter QFs; Mexico out after draw

GLENDALE, 1 JULY

Ecuador avoided a penalty shot in stoppage time after a review and earned a spot the Copa America quarterfinals with a 0-0 draw against Mexico.

Mexico on Sunday night initially received a penalty kick from referee Mario Alberto Escobar Toca when Ecuador's Félix Torres took down Mexican forward Guillermo Martínez in the penalty box. VAR rescinded the penalty and Mexico was awarded a corner kick, sending in a chorus of boos raining down from the Mexican fans at State Farm Stadium.

Ahead on goal differential, Ecuador weathered a second-half push by Mexico at State Farm Stadium to finish second in Group B behind Venezuela. Ecuador will face Group A winner Argentina in the quarterfinals Thursday in Houston.

Mexico failed to get out of the group stage for the fourth time in its last five Copa America appearances, which could put coach Jaime Lozano's job in jeopardy. —*AP*

F1: Norris fumes at Verstappen 'reckless' move

VIENNA, 20 JULY

McLaren driver Lando Norris accused Max Verstappen, his friend and now closest rival, of unfair driving that was "just a bit reckless" and "a little bit desperate", after a no-holds-barred battle for victory at the Austrian Grand Prix ended in a collision that wrecked both their races. Norris, who was challenging the world champion for the lead in the closing laps after the Red Bull driver had been delayed by a slow final pit stop, felt Verstappen had several times moved under braking when defending his position. The pair have become the dominant forces in Formula 1 since the Miami Grand Prix in early May, but until this weekend at the Red Bull Ring they had not disputed the lead wheel to wheel on track. —***BBC News***

Gukesh won't challenge Liren on home turf

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

India's efforts to secure a home World Championships match for D Gukesh came to nought with Singapore pipping Delhi and Chennai to claim hosting rights for the premier chess contest which will pit the youngest challenger in the history against defending champion Ding Liren from China. The Tamil Nadu government and All India Chess Federation (AICF) had submitted separate bids to FIDE, the world chess body. The match, which will offer a prize money of $ 2.5 million, will be held between 20 November and 15 Decemaber in 2024. —***PTI***

Yoga in Asian Games soon, says IOA chief Usha

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

The India Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha on Monday said the Olympic Council of Asia's (OCA) Executive Board has agreed to include yoga in the Asian Games and a confirmation from the OCA's General Assembly would pave the way for its inclusion to the event's programme. Usha said OCA acting president Randhir Singh informed her about EB's decision. She thanked him for his "unflinching support" to yoga's inclusion as a competitive sport in the Asian Games. "I am delighted that the OCA Executive Board spontaneously agreed to India's request to give yoga the recognition it deserves. The proposal shall now move through the Sports Committee to the General Assembly for confirmation," An IOA source said it is just the first step towards yoga's inclusion in the multi-sport event as a medal sport. —***PTI***

Badminton: Malaysia beats India in QFs

NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

India ran powerhouse Malaysia close but eventually went down 2-3 in the quarterfinals of the Badminton Asia Junior Mixed team championships on Monday.

The Indians will now participate in the individual championship, beginning from Wednesday.

India made yet another change to their mixed doubles pairing in the quarterfinals, combining Sanskar Saraswat with Shravani Walekar.

India looked on course of an upset win when Pranay Shettigar clinched the opening game against Muhammad Faiq.

But he could not sustain the momentum and lost 15-21, 21-18, 21-19 in an hour and six minutes and Malaysia then grabbed the opportunity.

Walekar and Navya Kanderi went down 16-21, 15-21 against Bui Ong Xin Yee and Carmen Ting.

In the crucial boys' doubles, Bhargav Ram Arigela and Arsh Mohammad lost to Kang and Aaron Tai 18-21, 10-21.

Result (Quarterfinals):
India lost to Malaysia 2-3: (Sanskar Saraswat/Shravani Walekar beat Kang Khai Xing/Noraqilha Maisarah 21-16, 13-21, 21-17; Tanvi Sharma beat Siti Zulaikha 21-15, 15-21, 22-20; Pranay Shettigar lost to Mohammad Faiq 21-15, 18-21, 19-21; Navya Kanderi/Shravani Walekar lost to Bui Ong Xin Yee/Carmen Ting 16-21, 15-21; Bhargav Ram Arigela/Arsh Mohammad lost to Kang Khai Xing/Aaron Tai 18-21, 10-21. —*PTI*

Viswanathan Anand wins Leon Masters for 10th time

LEON, 1 JULY

Viswanathan Anand **PHOTO: X@CHESS24COM**

Five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand proved his mettle once again and defeated Spaniard Jaime Santos Latasa 3-1 in the finals to win the Leon Masters for a 10th time here.

The 54-year-old Anand, who lived in Spain for many years before shifting his base back to Chennai, proved yet again that this was one of his favourite hunting grounds. It was in 1996, or 28 years back, that Anand won his first title here.

The format featured four players with his compatriot Arjun Erigaise, the world number four, as the fourth seed and Bulgarian Veselin Topalov being the other two players in the tournament. Each round featured four games of 20 minutes each with a 10-second increment after every move.

Arjun had lost to Santos Latasa in the second semifinals by a score of 1.5-2.5 which was considered a sensational victory for the latter given the vast difference in the ratings. Earlier in the first semifinal, the legendary duel between Topalov and Anand had ended in favour of the Indian who won the third game before drawing the remaining three. —*PTI*

Karthik is new RCB batting coach, mentor

BENGALURU, 1 JULY

Former India wicketkeeper-batter Dinesh Karthik, who announced his retirement from all forms of cricket last month, on Monday was appointed as batting coach and mentor by Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

"Welcome our keeper in every sense, Dinesh Karthik back into RCB in an all new avatar. DK will be the batting coach and mentor of RCB Men's team," RCB posted on 'X'.

"You can take the man out of cricket but not cricket out of the man! Shower him with all the love, 12th Man Army," the post added. Terming this an exciting opportunity, Karthik stated: "Coaching at a professional level is incredibly exciting for me and is something I'm truly passionate about as a new chapter in my life. Hopefully, the breadth of my experiences as a player can contribute to the development of the group and bring added value.

"I believe that cricket success hinges not only on technical proficiency but also on match intelligence and composure. I am eager to coach and mentor our batting group, helping them to not only refine their method but also to develop the keen match awareness needed to excel under pressure.

"It's also great that I can continue my association with RCB as the franchise continues to move from strength to strength," he stated in a release issued by RCB. —*PTI*

Bajrang Punia **PHOTO: PTI**

NADA WAS TARGETING ME, SAYS BAJRANG

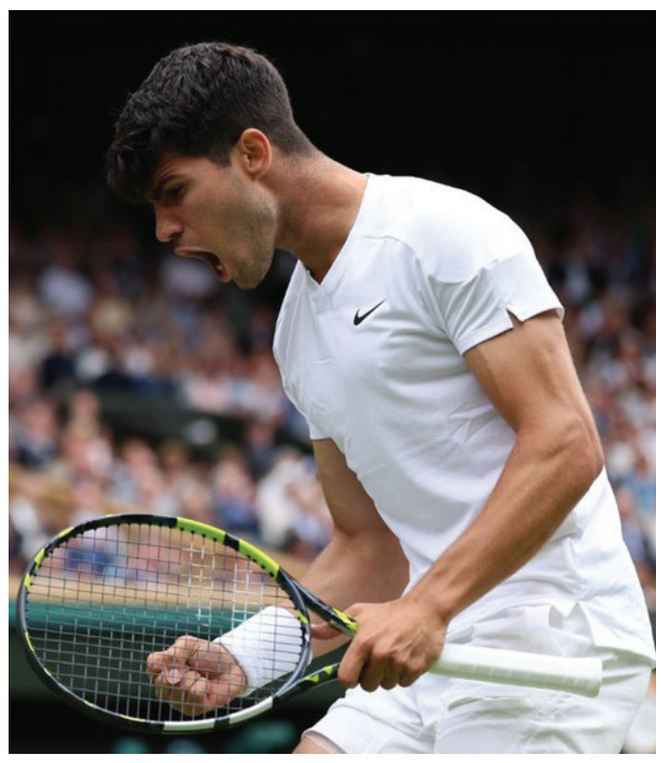
NEW DELHI, 1 JULY

Wrestler Bajrang Punia on Monday alleged that National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) was targeting him for pointing out flaws in their system and vowed to challenge their arrogance, which he claimed wants to end his sporting career.

Bajrang was suspended by NADA for the second time on 24 June after the wrestler got relief from the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (ADDP) of the agency.

ADDP had lifted the first suspension on the grounds that NADA had not officially charged him for doping by serving the wrestler a formal notice. Bajrang was suspended for refusing to provide his sample during the selection trials held in Sonepat on 10 March. He had lost the trials and thus missed out on the chance to qualify for Paris Olympics. The 30-year-old multiple-time World Championship medallist claimed that he never refused to give a sample but only sought an answer to why NADA sent an expired kit for sample collection in December 2023. —*PTI*

ROAR OF A WINNER



Carlos Alcaraz opened his Wimbledon title defence with a hard-fought victory over Estonian qualifier Mark Lajal. The Spaniard won 7-6 (7-3) 7-5 6-2 to begin proceedings on Centre Court. **PHOTO: X@WIMBELDON**

Team India stuck in WI due to hurricane

BRIDGETOWN, 1 JULY

The victorious Indian cricket team remains stranded in Barbados after a Category 4 hurricane hit the Caribbean islands here in the wee hours of Monday, delaying its departure back home by at least another day.

The Rohit Sharma-led side has stayed put in a five-star hotel since its triumph over South Africa in the T20 World Cup final here on Saturday. As per the forecast, life-threatening winds and storm lashed Barbados and nearby islands on Monday. The country, with a population of close to three lakh, has been in a lockdown since Sunday evening.

The main international airport is shut until further notice with water and electricity supply also getting disrupted. "Like you people, we are also stuck here. First we need to see how to get the players and everyone out of here safely and then we will think about the felicitation upon arrival in India," said Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah, who got here ahead of the big final. The squad, along with top BCCI officials including Jay Shah, was supposed to leave for India via a charter flight on Monday but it was not possible due to the closure of the airport. BCCI is also trying to get the travelling Indian media out of the hurricane-hit region. —*PTI*

The squad, along with top BCCI officials including Jay Shah, was supposed to leave for India via a charter flight on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Afg women request ICC to help set up refugee team

KABUL, 1 JULY

After a splendid performance by Men's Afghanistan headed by its captain Rashid Khan in the recently concluded International Cricket Council (ICC) Men's T20 World Cup, the members of the former Afghanistan women's team have called on the ICC to help them form a refugee team based in Australia.

Formed in 2010, the Afghanistan women's team disbanded in 2021 when the Taliban returned to power and banned women from universities, parks, sports and raided the homes of female athletes.

The men's team has retained its Test status and reached the semi-finals of the T20 World Cup last week.

In a letter to ICC chair Greg Barclay, the Afghanistan women said: "Creating a team of Afghan refugees can give us a chance to play, coach and administer a cricket team without borders.

"The creation of this team will allow all Afghan women who want to represent their country to come together under one banner."

But 25 female cricketers were handed contracts by the ACB in 2020, less than a year before the Taliban returned to power, ending any progress towards Afghanistan playing an official women's international. At least 20 Afghan women's cricketers managed to leave the country and are currently living in Australia. —*BBC News*

WOMEN TEST CRICKET

India seals 10 wickets win over SA

CHENNAI, 1 JULY

India were made to wait a tad longer for the winning moment by centurion Laura Wolvaardt, but they eventually went past the line convincingly by 10 wickets on the fourth and final day of the one-off women's Test against South Africa on Monday.

India were required to chase a modest 37 after bowling out South Africa for 373 in their second innings and the hosts accomplished the task in 9.2 overs without losing a wicket. India had declared their first innings closed at 603 for six.

The opening duo of Shubha Satheesh (13 not out) and Shafali Verma (24 not out) steered their side home comfortably.

Indian players during the prize distribution ceremony after defeating South Africa at MA Chidambaram Stadium, in Chennai on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

This is India's second 10-wicket triumph in Tests after a scoring a similar win over the Proteas at Paarl in 2002. After getting bundled out 266 in their first innings, South Africa fought well through hundred-makers Wolvaardt (122, 314b, 16x4) and Sune Luus (109, 203b, 18x4) in the second innings.

Meanwhile, the tourists went past 316 to register their highest score in Test cricket, going past the 315 they made against England at Shenley in 2003.

The hosts eventually conceded the lead in the final session. This was the third instance of India giving away the lead after enforcing a follow-on and the fifth overall.

The partnership between De Klerk and Masabata Klaas produced 23 runs before the latter fell to Shafali, who cleaned her up. De Klerk, who was dropped on fifty by Renuka Singh and Vastrakar during a mix-up, brought up her half-century soon but Rajeshwari Gayakwad knocked her out for 61. —*PTI*